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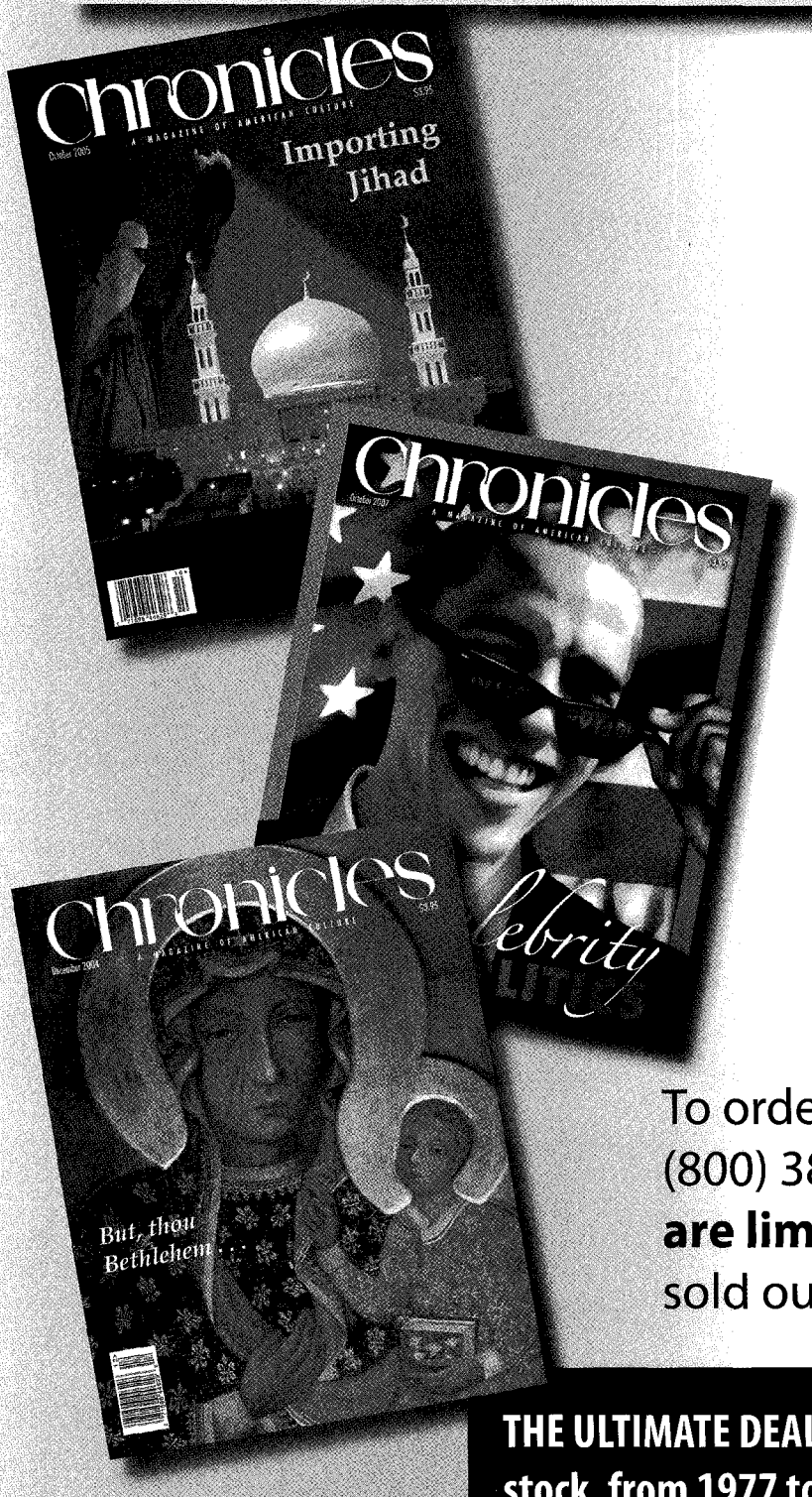

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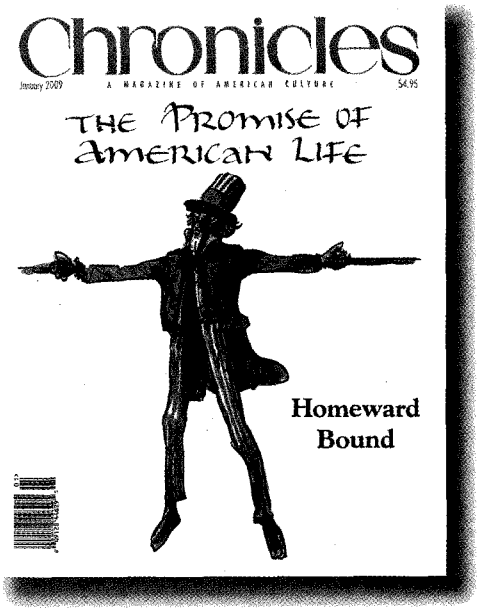
Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE



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Cover art by Warren Chappell.
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PUBLISHER
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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
Website: *www.chroniclesmagazine.org*
Editorial Phone: (815) 964-5054.
Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5813.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-877-5459.

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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $44.99 (foreign subscriptions add $15 for surface delivery, $48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chronicles, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
A Magazine of American Culture
Vol. 33, No. 1 January 2009
Printed in the United States of America

On Hating Women

I don't subscribe to *Chronicles* to read simplistic misogynistic trash like Aaron D. Wolf's "Pro-Choice Christians" (*Views*, November 2008), in which he reduces Sarah Palin and all women to a "function"—that of wife and mother. This article is written in the same redneck spirit as the effigy of Palin hung in West Hollywood (see CBS News's "Halloween Palin Prop Sparks Controversy in WeHo"). Women are people; and "people" have skills other than those connected with their genitals.

Respect for women as people is one of the basic principles of Christianity. The misogynistic point of view that allegedly glorifies "wife and mother" but in actual fact reduces women to sexual slavery to the male gender's [*sic*] relentless biological drive to frame everything in terms of sex was specifically battled by Christ. Christianity is the only world religion that consistently combats the male libido and its compulsion to herd women into the small confines of sexual chattel roles. The Christian religion gave birth to the spiritual medieval chivalric attitudes toward women—because it was women who followed Christ, funded him, fed him, hosted Christian gatherings in their homes, and stood at the base of the cross when most of His male disciples had fled. Christianity is the only religion that expressly forbade men's polygamy and their shedding women like so many Kleenex by divorcing them at will. Christ defended an adulteress by telling men to pay attention to their own numerous adulteries. Christ was pro-woman—in an era (like the one Aaron Wolf still lives in mentally) in which women were scorned—a scorn that persists to this day in the Arab Mideast and other areas of the world as yet uninfluenced by the morally superior Christian religion. If Christ accepted the support of women around Him without telling them to go home and tend to their children, no one should assume the mantle of knowing better than Christ.

Shame on you, Aaron Wolf.

—Maureen Cote
Arlington, VA

Mr. Wolf Replies:

Miss Cote uses an important term: *redneck*—one whose neck is red from working in the sun. This applies especially to farm workers and, because the South has had lots of them, Southerners. As a scion of Arkansas and Tennessee farmers who has a small farm himself, I'll wear it. Apparently, in places like WeHo, *redneck* means someone who hangs female political candidates in effigy. I've never heard a story from any of my kin about such activities—and I've heard some humdingers.

Did I ever tell you the one about Great-Grandma Kee during the Depression? Now Great-Grandma was a veritable chef. As an orphan, she'd been adopted by this German family that made her into something of a slave. She'd learned how to cook just about anything. She and Great-Grandpa had this little place next to the train stop in Paragould, and it had lots of peach trees. She'd make this peach cobbler that'd knock Paula Deen's socks off.

Bang-bang-bang came the knock at the door one day when Great-Grandpa was out there redneckin' it up in the cotton fields. *Don't get that—it's just them hobos*, somebody said. "No," said Great-Grandma, "we are Christians. 'Charity never faileth.'" (She'd read that somewhere.)

"Ma'am, would ye have any work needin' done at your place?"

"Nawsir, none that I can think of. Wait—I do have some hot peach cobbler that needs eatin'."

"Thank you. God bless you, Ma'am. We'll be on our way then."

I named my daughter after Mrs. Andrew Kee (that's how she signed). But during those precious years when she was still living, I never heard Miss Nora Mae say that she didn't feel like a person because her skills were underutilized.

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by John C. Seiler, Jr.

"Gay Marriage" in California: Back on the Docket

In modern America, the absurd is forced on everyone with the full coercive powers of an omnipotent state—all in the name of "rights."

Same-sex "marriage" first was "legalized" in 2003 when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court drove matrimony off Chappaquiddick's Dike Bridge and let it drown. In October 2008, Connecticut's Supreme Court did the same.

But the most drama has come from California. Domestic "partnerships"—another absurdity in which same-sex "couples" are granted all the rights of marriage but the name—were legalized by the legislature in 1999. In 2000, voters passed an initiative statute that banned same-sex "marriage," but it was not a constitutional amendment. Then in May 2008, the California Supreme Court ruled 4-3 that same-sex "marriages" have equal standing with real marriages. Thus can four judges overturn reality.

In his majority opinion, Republican Chief Justice Ronald M. George wrote:

> [O]ur task in this proceeding is not to decide whether we believe, as a matter of policy, that the officially recognized relationship of a same-sex couple should be designated a marriage rather than a domestic partnership, but instead only to determine whether the difference in official names of the relationships violates the California Constitution.

Official names? Even William of Occam might be taken aback at such extreme nominalism.

Same-sex "couples" rushed to county clerks' offices to gain the Golden State's blessing for the golden rings on their fingers. Normal folks were outraged and began circulating petitions to place on the November ballot an initiative to repeal the court's ruling by amending the constitution—what became Proposition 8.

Proposition titles and summaries—what the voter sees in the voting booth—are written by the attorney general, who now is Jerry Brown, the infamous "Governor Moonbeam" who misruled the state from 1975 to 1982. Prop. 8 backers submitted "The California Marriage Protection Act." He changed that to read "Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry." Prop. 8 backers appealed his wording in the courts, but lost.

A September 18 Field Poll showed that the rewording dropped support for the proposition from 58 percent to 42 percent. Still, on November 4, Prop. 8 passed, 52 percent to 48 percent.

A decisive factor was the pro-8 campaign's decision to emphasize how the new ideology would be forced on schoolchildren. Section 200 of the state education code states:

> It is the policy of the State of California to afford all persons in public schools, regardless of their disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state. The purpose of this chapter is to prohibit acts that are contrary to that policy and to provide remedies therefor.

After Prop. 8 won, anti-8 activists immediately began picketing Mormon temples, because Mormons contributed $20 million to the pro-8 side's total spending of $35.8 million. Anti-8 spending was $37.6 million.

Pickets also went up against Catholic churches and conservative Protestant churches that had supported Prop. 8 through sermons and literature tables on church property.

An exit poll showed that Prop. 8 was backed by only 49 percent of whites and Asians, but by 52 percent of Hispanics and 70 percent of blacks. The latter had come out in force to vote for Barack Obama (who had opposed Prop. 8) and may have decided the matter. When the news broke, anti-8 protesters began attacking blacks.

California Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, a black Democrat who opposed Prop. 8, complained:

> I have friends in Los Angeles, who are African Americans in the [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] community, and they went out to protest the vote and had racial epithets hurled at them. A couple of them were fearful, and they left because they were threatened.

So much for Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition.

The anti-8 side is planning its own initiative for the June 2010 ballot to repeal Prop. 8 and has also filed appeals, which will be taken up by the California Supreme Court in March, with a decision expected by June. The pro-8 side warned that, should the court overturn the measure, recalls would be launched against the offending justices. Everyone remembers that Gov. Gray Davis was recalled in 2003.

The court will likely uphold Prop. 8, kicking the matter into the future for a decision by an Obamized U.S. Supreme Court.

John C. Seiler, Jr., wrote editorials for 19 years at the Orange County Register. *He now is a freelance writer blogging at* JohnSeilerBlogs.com.

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THE STUPID PARTY RIDES AGAIN

On November 4, 2008, voters decisively rejected the Republican Party, voting for Barack Obama over John McCain by a margin of 52.8 percent to 45.9. Obama won 365 electoral votes to McCain's 173, including every state in the Northeast and industrial Midwest; every state on the Pacific Coast; Florida, the state that ensured George W. Bush's election in 2000; Ohio, the state that ensured Bush's reelection in 2004; and such former Republican strongholds as Virginia, North Carolina, and Colorado. Democrats also made strong gains in both the House and the Senate. When Obama takes office, his party will have at least 58 U.S. senators and 255 representatives, 37 more than is needed to control the House.

There can be little doubt that these results reflect, first and foremost, a stunning repudiation of George W. Bush, who has discredited conservatism without ever being a conservative himself. Bush's approval rating is now lower than any other U.S. president's, including Nixon's after Watergate. Bush governed as the neoconservative president *par excellence*, letting the disastrous and unpopular war in Iraq become the centerpiece of his administration, making the "global democratic revolution" the focus of his policy, and advocating both mass immigration and global free trade, all the while dramatically expanding the size and scope of the federal government. At the end of his presidency, Bush sought and received a massive bailout of Wall Street, whose recklessness had been encouraged by his administration. That bailout, if the actions of the Federal Reserve are included, totals over four trillion dollars as of this writing. Despite these unprecedented expenditures, the Dow has fallen below the level first reached in 1997.

Senator McCain made no real effort to distance himself from Bush, enthusiastically backing the Wall Street bailout and the Iraq war, promising in his nomination speech that the United States would always accept the demands of the "global economy," and reminding Hispanic voters of his long support for mass immigration. McCain studiously ignored such perennial vote-winning issues for the GOP as affirmative action, abortion, and "gay marriage," even though Obama's support for legalized infanticide and opposition to the Defense of Marriage Act placed the Democratic candidate far to the left of the vast majority of Americans. McCain made a halfhearted effort to tie Obama to 60's radical William Ayers, while ignoring Obama's far more substantial ties to the Rev. Jeremiah Wright. So squeamish was McCain about anything even remotely related to race that it appeared at times that he would rather lose than stop the first black nominee of either major party from becoming president. He reinforced this in his concession speech, praising the "election of an African-American to the presidency of the United States" and denouncing the "cruel and frightful bigotry" of America's past. Just as significantly, McCain failed to offer a coherent economic plan to Americans increasingly worried about the faltering economy.

Thus, McCain never attempted to address the concerns of voters who are attracted to the GOP, or even displayed any real understanding of who those voters are. The GOP is the party of the white middle class, yet exit polls show that McCain won the white vote by only 55 to 43 percent, while losing the black vote 96 to 3 percent, the Hispanic vote 67 to 30, and the Asian vote 63 to 34. These figures are particularly striking, given all the efforts by Bush and McCain to endear themselves to minority voters, including RNC Chairman Ken Mehlman's apology to the NAACP for his party's Southern strategy, Bush's penchant for warbling in Spanish, and Bush and McCain's long history of pandering to Hispanics on immigration. In fact, despite all the favorable attention they got from the Bush administration, 80 percent of Hispanics disapproved of Bush's job as president. Obama won an overwhelming victory among lower-income Americans, while also managing to win voters making over $100,000 per year, 52 to 47 percent. McCain won white Protestants 65 to 34 percent, white evangelicals by a crushing 73 to 26 percent, and white Catholics 52 to 47 percent, while losing the Jewish vote, voters of other faiths, and those with no religious affiliation by wide margins. Hispanic Catholics voted so heavily for Obama that he carried the overall Catholic vote 54 to 45 percent.

It would appear, then, that the GOP should try to solidify its hold on the white middle class by advocating policies that advance the interests of those voters, while abandoning the neoconservative policies that made Bush so unpopular. As Steve Sailer has long argued, the best strategy for Republicans is to maximize their share of the white vote, something Ronald Reagan mastered by mixing social conservatism with economic policies that were not seen as a threat to Middle Americans, thereby adding the Reagan Democrats to the Republican coalition and dominating U.S. politics for 28 years. But the denizens of the Stupid Party have forgotten this lesson, with both the Bush administration and congressional Republicans signaling their willingness to cede the industrial Midwest to Democrats for years to come by their scornful opposition to any federal loans for American automakers, even though the amount Detroit is requesting is a tiny fraction of what the Bush administration has given to Wall Street. Proving that he has learned nothing from defeat, McCain told the *Washington Post* on November 25 that "I still am committed to . . . providing a path to citizenship [for] many of those who are here illegally." And the neocons are encouraging more stupidity, with David Brooks announcing that "Conservatives have to appeal more to Hispanics" and David Frum arguing that the GOP has to become "less polarizing

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on social issues" and abandon its opposition to abortion. In other words, the neoconservative plan is to scorn those voters who have faithfully supported the GOP—or used to, until the economy deteriorated—and to pursue those voters who have never supported the Republicans. This defeat may well be the first of many.

—*Tom Piatak*

KISS WALL STREET GOODBYE

Does the public stock market actually serve a purpose? To some free-market zealots, the answer is obvious: The public markets increase liquidity, and this enables fledgling businesses to get off the ground by allowing them access to capital. Moreover, we can all reap the benefits of capitalism's "creative destruction" and become a nation of investors (as opposed to one of actual producers). For well over a decade, the public bought this line with increasing gullibility. New research, however, suggests that the only institutions public financing helps are those which arrange the financing. That is to say, public equity finance is a business whose greatest beneficiaries are its salesmen.

Lawrence E. Mitchell, a professor of business law at George Washington University, argues in a recent paper that the "empirical evidence is clear that the American public stock market rarely has been a significant factor in financing industrial enterprises in the United States. The only American business sector to rely upon public stock issuances as an important source of financing public activity is the financial industry itself." Based on data going back to 1955 and in some cases even earlier, Mitchell finds that "America's economy is increasingly based on finance, and our public financial markets principally are financing finance." In fact, he concludes, "the data raises the question of why we incur the very substantial economic and social costs of a public stock market in the first place."

It is a question worth asking in light of the large-scale collapse of the stock market—precipitated in significant part by the even larger collapse of the mortgage and credit markets. The "market"—by which nearly everyone means the stock market—was supposed to make us all rich, but we seem to have forgotten that there should be some real value behind all that common stock. The crisis indicates that when you build a market on value that everyone merely believes to be worth something—until they don't—that market may not provide long-term stability.

It seems that when people have wanted to build a business that produces something—food, materials, other goods—they have had little need historically for the public markets. When you want to sell financial snake oil, however, you "go public" and get investments from average Americans and their pension-fund managers seeking a quick profit. Worse, obsessions with quarterly results and no-strings profits have made the market more volatile than ever before; most "investors" should be called "traders," as the reason for holding stock is no longer to increase wealth over time at a rate greater than inflation but to turn it over quickly by selling as soon as the price rises.

Mitchell's research comes out at a fortuitous time, as the federal government is pumping money into financial institutions to keep the markets going, in order to "avoid chaos." The major investment banks have either folded or turned themselves into normal, staid commercial banks. As Mitchell's paper implies, the government might have been better off lending our tax dollars to companies that actually build something—or, better yet, reducing our tax burden.

—*Anonymous*

JUST ONE MORE JUSTICE . . .

At the polls last November, conservatives and libertarians who vote according to conscience had two options: Bob Barr (Libertarian Party) and Chuck Baldwin (Constitution Party). Combined, these two garnered only 719,655 votes—a paltry amount compared with John McCain's 59,082,002. For those who believe in smaller government, fiscal responsibility, and individual liberty, the 2008 election was the perfect opportunity to reject the GOP's latest insult. Why, then, did 59 million Americans hold their noses and pull the lever for McCain?

The answer is complicated, especially in a system that discourages third parties. Yet, while systemic barriers tell us part of the story, we must not discount the issue of judges. Other than a dislike for the Democratic Party, control of the federal courts—especially the Supreme Court—has become the central issue that has garnered sizeable conservative and libertarian votes for Bush I, Bob Dole, Bush II, and now McCain.

In debates with fellow travelers about McCain, I often heard the following: "Sure, he's not perfect, but if we get one more Roberts or Alito on the Supreme Court, we can rein in some of the real excesses of government and maybe even overturn *Roe*."

Republicans have controlled the White House for 28 of the last 40 years and have nominated seven of the nine sitting Supreme Court justices. (Actually, four years should be tacked on to the Republicans' time of possession because Jimmy Carter had no opportunity to appoint a justice.) Despite the GOP's control of the Court, we have seen few watershed decisions curbing government power or protecting individual rights. In fact, just the opposite has occurred.

For example, in *Gonzales* v. *Raich* (2005), a landmark Commerce Clause case, the Court decided that Congress's power to regulate local, intrastate matters is boundless. The question presented in *Raich* was whether Congress could prohibit the medicinal use of cannabis *via* the federal Controlled Substances Act when the cannabis at issue was grown using only soil, water, nutrients, tools, and supplies made or originating in a single state, never crossed state lines, and never was sold in the stream of commerce. Even conservative lion Antonin Scalia concurred in the judgment.

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Another example is *Kelo* v. *City of New London* (2005), in which the Court deleted the "public use" requirement from the Fifth Amendment and approved government taking and transfer of private property when the transferee promises to make a more productive use of it than the original owner did.

And let's not forget *Grutter* v. *Bollinger* (2003), in which the Court held that the Constitution does not prohibit the University of Michigan's law school from using race in admission decisions to obtain "the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body." So much for the color-blind Constitution.

Use of international law has also been on the rise in recent years. When prohibiting the death penalty for murderers who are mildly mentally retarded, the Court, in *Atkins* v. *Virginia* (2002), cited a plethora of foreign decisions in support of its ruling.

Not so fast, a loyal Bush or McCain voter might say. What about *District of Columbia* v. *Heller* (2008), in which the Court held that the plain language of the Second Amendment recognizes a personal right, belonging to "the people," to possess firearms? Without Dubya's nominations of Roberts and Alito, the right to bear arms might be confined to service in state militias or the National Guard.

Undoubtedly, *Heller* was correctly decided, and President Bush's two Supreme Court nominees seem to be excellent jurists. But in the greater scheme of things, *Heller* has not made a difference in the lives of ordinary Americans. Reasonable gun-control laws are still permissible; *Heller* simply struck down Washington, D.C.'s ridiculous ban on possession of usable handguns in the home.

Even if one considers *Heller* a home run, surely it cannot outweigh the multiple strikeouts from the Bush administration that have adversely affected millions of lives. On the economic front, Bush gave Americans a ten-trillion-dollar national debt that is 70 percent of GDP, the highest percentage since 1955. Good-paying manufacturing jobs continued to move overseas; America has lost three million of them since 2001. For those who still have jobs, median incomes fell by $1,000 between 2000 and 2006.

With the signing of the Medicare Prescription Drug Modernization Act, President Bush set in motion the largest expansion of the welfare state since 1965. The law is expected to cost $1.2 trillion over the next ten years.

The federal government's power over local schools has also increased. President Bush was a champion of the No Child Left Behind Act, which imposed outcome-based education in exchange for federal funding.

The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 was a result of President Bush's ongoing "War on Terror." Under this legislation, government investigators can more easily eavesdrop on our internet activity, and law-enforcement officers are now in the "domestic intelligence" business. Precious civil liberties took a backseat to security.

Of course, the Bush measure that will have the most lasting effect is the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which authorizes the secretary of the treasury to spend billions to purchase and manage "troubled assets" from financial institutions. This is the largest government intervention in the private economy in the history of the United States. It makes FDR's New Deal and Truman's seizure of the steel mills look like small potatoes.

While the shaping of the judiciary is one issue a voter should weigh in casting a presidential ballot, it pays to remember that the Supreme Court is not the engine behind American government, nor is it a suitable vehicle to bring about long-term change. The elected branches of government are the real seats of power and the mechanisms that reshape society. Conservatives and libertarians who have voted in election after election for left-leaning GOP presidential candidates in hopes of controlling the courts have received a dismal return on their investment. In so voting, they have turned a blind eye to the massive expansions of federal power and deleterious economic and social policies that GOP candidates and presidents have pushed.

The Obama presidency will be nothing new. It represents the same opportunity that we've had all along, since Republicans haven't changed the world through the appointment of judges—and were never going to.

—William J. Watkins

IRREPLACEABLE MEN

Chronicles, as the premier journal of real American culture, takes notice, though belatedly, of the loss of two great scholars of American literature. They were both admirers and faithful readers of this magazine, to which I had the pleasure of introducing them. I knew and learned from both and like to think that I was respected as a scholar by both, given that I was the only historian regularly invited by either to sit on doctoral-dissertation committees in the University of South Carolina English Department, where both served. And given that both, being great scholars, naturally had no high opinion of the professionalism of most academics. A great scholar is perhaps even rarer than a great writer.

James Babcock Meriwether (1928-2007) was the seminal and foremost Faulkner scholar of the world. He began the collecting and careful textual study of Faulkner's work as a graduate student at Princeton (where he was a classmate of George Garrett) even before the revival of interest that followed the 1949 Nobel Prize in Literature. Meriwether did not publish a great deal. Rather, he considered it his given role to foster careful research, the results of which were numerous doctoral dissertations, carefully corrected and authenticated texts, and countless articles by others.

Meriwether could easily have held chairs at more prestigious institutions like North Carolina or Texas, but he returned home because of his deep roots in, and love for, South Carolina, something that was surely without parallel in academia in the second half of the 20th century. His Faulkner seminars were legendary, but he insisted on regularly teaching freshman Eng-

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lish composition as well. Faulkner led him, perceptively, to Faulkner's predecessors in the Old South, and his seminal work incorporated such figures as William Gilmore Simms and A.B. Longstreet. That does not cover all the work he inspired or all his interests. Meriwether's Toscanini collection, now at the university, is remarkable. Thanks to Jim, I have a tape of Toscanini's rousing rendition of "Dixie" as he conducted it on his postwar tour of the United States.

Matthew Joseph Bruccoli (1931-2008) is perhaps best known as the premier F. Scott Fitzgerald scholar, but that does not begin to cover his contributions to the study of American literature, which extend to the Fitzgerald age and Fitzgerald's contemporaries and beyond. Perhaps his most lasting achievement is the marvelous *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, founded and directed by Bruccoli, with two partners, now at over 400 volumes.

His achievement that I value most is the editing and publication, with his wife, Arlyn, of *O Lost* by Thomas Wolfe. This is the authentic version of Wolfe's masterpiece, which was mangled and truncated by Maxwell Perkins into the inferior *Look Homeward, Angel*. (The execrable Perkins was long hyped as the masterful editor who had "made" Wolfe and other important writers.)

My two colleagues could not have been more unalike and, truth be told, did not much care for each other. Matt was a graduate of The Bronx High School of Science. He was visible on campus for his red sports car, Groucho Marx mustache, and brusque Bronx manner (which did indeed cover a kind heart). He lived contentedly at home in South Carolina for 40 years. Jim had the charm of old Carolina, gracious but with a subtle undercurrent of incorrigible pride. He loved South Carolina and thus was forced to live discontentedly with what the state and its university were becoming. Matt's mission was to document the history of American literature, while Jim's was to infuse dedication and rigor in the next generation of scholars. (Several of his Ph.D. students have contributed to *Chronicles*.) Given the now nearly completed deconstruction of the American academy, we shall not see their like again.

—*Clyde Wilson*

OBITER DICTA

Our poet this month is **Leo Yankevich**. His latest books are *The Last Silesian* (The Mandrake Press, 2005) and *Tikkun Olam & Other Poems* (The New Formalist Press, 2008). Mr. Yankevich lives with his wife and three sons in Gliwice, Poland, where he works as a translator and serves as the poetry editor for *The New Formalist*.

Our cover is a reprise of the July 1991 cover, by renowned artist **Warren Chappell**.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

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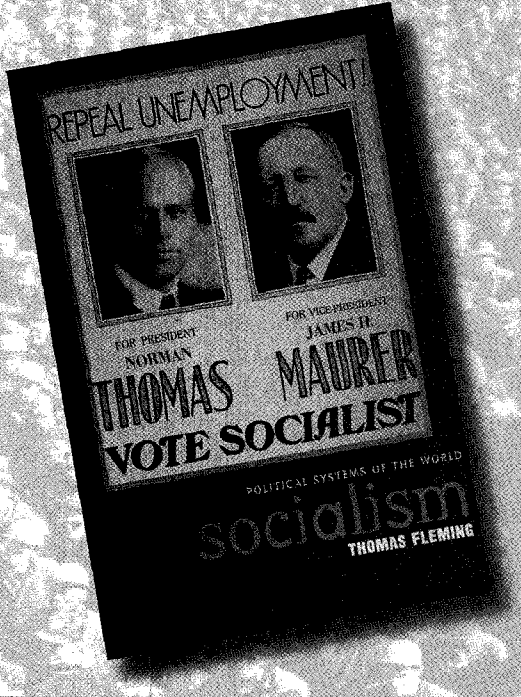

Socialism

by Thomas Fleming

From the Political Systems of the World series by Marshall Cavendish Benchmark

For as many teachers, students, politicians, and pundits who are ready to explain the thought of Engels or Rousseau, there are definitions of socialism. To understand a political or social theory, however, it is not enough to know its intellectual history. One must also learn how the theory manifested itself in the lives of men throughout time and around the world. In his latest book, the author of *The Politics of Human Nature* and *The Morality of Everyday Life* does both with clear and lively prose undergirded by unparalled expertise.

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by Thomas Fleming

Uncle Sam's Harem

These days bipolarism appears to be the "in" childhood malady touted by leftist psychologists, who previously promoted ADHD to explain away the disturbed behavior exhibited by postmodern children and adolescents. The list of problems is long: antisocial behavior, poor performance in school, sexual promiscuity; depression and suicide, drug abuse and alcoholism; violence and random acts of homicide in school. For all these ills leftists have devised medical explanations. Conservatives have their own set of simple explanations: School shooters play video games or take Ritalin or watch violent movies.

This is not to say that video games or even ADHD (if it is really a disease as opposed to an inexplicable syndrome) is insignificant. Who is to say? There is no such thing as a social science. Though there may sometimes be a dash of merit in the opinions of psychologists, sociologists, "political scientists," and economists, they utterly lack a rigorous scientific method and are completely incapable of predicting (much less preventing or curing) any of the maladies of an individual or a society.

The one possible explanation that cannot be discussed is the pathology of postmodern family life. When, for example, a young girl is sexually abused, the fact that her mother sleeps around and brings her partners home cannot be mentioned. When a child misbehaves in school, neither the mother's marital state nor the children's experience of daycare is supposed to be taken into consideration, because even to raise such questions would be tantamount to challenging the official theory of the family promulgated by psychologists, counselors, and other "experts." The new theory of marriage and family has virtually nothing in common with the old historical reality. In the course of the 20th century, the family underwent a transformation. What had been a semisovereign and autonomous social institution was undermined by the liberation of married women, liberalized divorce laws, child-protection statutes, public education, and the injection of women into the workplace. The result is something less like a traditional society made up of families than the soft totalitarian community of wives and children whom the sultan imprisoned in the Topkapi Palace.

Adolescence is a difficult period of transition from the carefree world of childhood to the heavy burden of adult responsibilities. In the simplest societies, young males must learn how to hunt and to fight and to establish themselves within the tribe whose rules they must learn. As societies become more complex, the transition becomes ever more difficult. In the 20th century, the troubles of youth and young manhood were a staple of American fiction, from Scott Fitzgerald to J.D. Salinger. But the anxieties of Holden Caulfield were nothing compared to the bewilderment of our young people, who do not brood over poetry but obsess over brand names and seem in all too many cases to prefer to conduct their courtships by computer.

American children are no longer brought up within sheltering households; from an early age they are shipped off to schools and camps, sports teams and music classes. In economic terms, families are outsourcing many of their vital functions. Children are now separated from their families for a large part of the day, and they are taught to depend on experts in various agencies and organizations for everything they do. In fact, many kids today have never known what liberty is; have never spent an afternoon in the woods, unless it was organized by the Boy Scouts or Outward Bound; have never read a book unless it was assigned in school; have never indulged a whim that was not scripted and directed by some group of professional do-gooding malefactors with social-science M.A.'s.

The conventional explanation for this phenomenon can be summed up in the word *ambition*. Students and their parents understand that success in a career depends on success in college, and prestigious colleges require not just good grades but evidence of leadership displayed in multiple activities: sports, music and drama, part-time jobs, and volunteer work. Parents complain frequently that they spend too much time driving their children from soccer practice to guitar lessons, but the busy schedules they are imposing on their children are also a reflection of their own overscheduled lives that leave little time to spend with their sons and daughters. I am often tempted to ask these ambitious kids and their parents: What are you ambitious for? In other words, what is the object you are so busily pursuing at the expense of all the qualities that people have believed are conducive to happiness?

Some psychologists have been warning parents not just against overscheduling and overprogramming the lives of their children but against the "disengagement" that results from the idle hours spent watching television or text-messaging, and some have gone so far as to call for children to form closer connections with their families and communities and even with the past. There was a time when par-

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ents did not need to be told the plain truths that every parent since Adam and Eve had known.

If the ideal remains a stable marriage that is the basis of an autonomous family, how is it possible to realize that ideal under the terms of what some Marxists call "late capitalism," when even the consumption functions of the household—eating, housecleaning, laundry—are routinely handled by outside providers, and when all the functions of intellectual instruction, moral guidance, and even such things as entertainment can be discharged by public officials and paid professionals? We blame society for our ills, but we might reflect that these extrafamilial services are only available; they are not mandatory.

It is still possible to educate one's children at home or in private schools. Such things are difficult and expensive, because families are required to pay taxes to support government schools; the choice is, however, open to most people, and in a period of marked decline in the quality of all schools, homeschooling becomes ever more attractive to more people. Government drains much of the family's authority, but there are other sources of conflict that tend to legitimate the family as an institution. There are many circumstances under which a married woman might need to or might wish to work. Some of the reasons are better than others, but one of the effects will be an inevitable competition between a man and woman who are no longer "merely" husband and wife but two wage-earners on career paths.

The rivalry is most pronounced where both spouses are active members of a profession, but a working-class male is just as likely to resent the authority conferred by his wife's low-paying clerical job, especially if they treat his salary as the family income and reserve hers for special purposes. Any distinction of this sort is liable to breed dissension. If husband and wife cannot always act as one flesh, they can at least be merged into one bank account and a joint tax return.

Religious, political, and ethnic differences can also turn the family home into the battleground of a civil war. In cases of mixed marriage, some conservative religious groups have insisted that the "alien" spouse either convert or promise to rear the child in the faith. What may seem, at first sight, to be bigotry is probably a sound idea. If husband and wife cannot agree on their worship of God, they are either indifferent to religious questions or else so divided on essentials that the children will end up being torn between the parents' churches. In either case, they are unlikely to rear the children in either or any faith.

We all know of families in which each child is encouraged to discover his own identity. I used to know an academic family in which each member had chosen, almost at random, a religious tradition: The son opted for Zen Buddhism, one daughter became a liberal rabbi, while the other became a staunch Episcopalian. It all seemed endearing to outsiders, but quite apart from the problem of sincerity—they picked their religion the way most people choose a brand of beer—the family could not worship together. They did not eat together either. At one Thanksgiving feast I attended, the father took his tray to a chair in front of the television set in order to argue with the anchorman.

It is through the rituals of common meals, common worship, and common work that a family discovers its identity. The pleasures and opportunities, no less than the pressures and stresses of modern existence, threaten this identity. Children have their endless rounds of music and dance and tennis lessons, clubs and parties to attend, to say nothing of school functions that sometimes seem to require whole weeks of afternoons for meetings and practice sessions. Parents also join clubs and attend classes and may only have the chance to greet their children as a group on the way out the door to school. In popular entertainment, these activities are conventionally portrayed as the fruits of success and popularity, the sometimes hectic rewards that await exuberant and talented individuals. What many of us sense, however, is the familiar story of the hare with many friends. The more activities we undertake, the less seriously we devote ourselves to any of them; the more friends we make, the less we value them (and they us); the more we spend time outside the home, the less capable we are of being at home at any time in our lives.

Even in the absence of community sanctions, it is still possible to act as if such sanctions existed and to communicate our sense of propriety to family and friends. What is the alternative? A society in which our wives and children are prisoners of Uncle Sam's Harem.

There is no single formula to fit all circumstances. Some people are more active, more demanding than others, and it would be wrong to stigmatize them as disloyal to their families. Of course, many enthusiasms can be shared by an entire household, even if all the members are not equally enthusiastic. Many families have passions for outdoor life—camping, hunting, fishing—on which they spend a great deal of time together. For others it may be music or tennis. Many might like the idea of teaching at home or running a family business, but either their circumstances or their lack of aptitude is an obstacle. What is important is the main objective—a family that sees itself as an indissoluble mystical entity like the Trinity: multiple persons but fundamentally one substance.

For those who take the deeper view of family life and understand the consequences of divorce, their commitment to family is more than a question of staying married, because we are inevitably forced to deal with other people who do not share our perspective. But even in the absence of community sanctions, it is still possible to act as if such sanctions existed and to communicate our sense of propriety to family and friends. What is the alternative? A society in which our wives and children are prisoners of Uncle Sam's Harem. ◁

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The Condemned House

(After a Black & White Photograph by Jared Carter)

by Leo Yankevich

Who alive remembers who lived there
seventy years ago? A family
of WASPs set in their ways? The leafless tree
in front was just a sapling then. Despair
did not weigh heavy on the owner's brow,
a man who paid his taxes, loved his wife,
and who in '44 gave up his life
for freedom. Who today cares or knows how?
And now the house is boarded up, its last
tenants peddlers of cheap crack cocaine,
its naked boards exposed to elements,
its roof's tar-paper caught in the grey blast,
around it dirty snow, above it rain.
The photo knows itself what it laments.

After the Old Masters

by Leo Yankevich

The father looks up to the sky or ceiling
(beyond the grey scale of the photograph)
with his son wrapped inside his cradling arms.
An orderly obscures the boy's midsection,
with silence says he is beyond all healing.
Outside the frame in color copter strafe
restokes the ire of Taliban gendarmes
who soothe the mother twisted in dejection.
We do not catch a whiff of her pained retching,
catch sight of their clenched fists or hear their words.
We see the father's sorrow-stricken eyes
in what could almost be a Rembrandt etching,
his pitch black pupils focused heavenwards
to where God's justice or His mercy lies.

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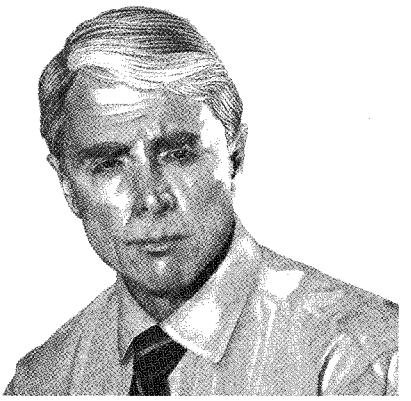
by Roger D. McGrath

What Really Happened on Hotrocks



Little did I know that when I entered junior high I would be confronting red-diaper babies. These kids were intellectually sophisticated and well educated. They told me many things that were contrary to my instincts. Having little knowledge of the subjects they addressed so adroitly, I was at a loss to respond. One of them stepped on familiar ground, though, when he told me that the flag raising on Iwo Jima was a staged propaganda stunt. The version of the event he had learned from his parents is still being propagated by leftists.

At 0900 on 19 February 1945, the Marines began hitting the beach on Iwo. Among them was Ralph Willis, who has written for *Chronicles*. The soft volcanic sand caused Sergeant Willis and his fellow jarheads to sink up to their ankles with each step. From concealed pillboxes and caves on Mt. Suribachi the Japanese poured machine-gun, mortar, and artillery fire into the Marines.

Casualties mounted, but the Marines struggled forward. By nightfall 30,000 Marines were ashore. Nearly 600 of them lay dead; another 2,000 had been wounded. Many of the dead were horribly mangled from artillery and mortar explosions. Darkness brought no relief. "The first night on Iwo Jima," said Robert Sherrod, a correspondent for *Time*, "can only be described as a nightmare in hell."

The 28th Marines had been given the job of taking Suribachi, which they had code-named Hotrocks. On the morning of 23 February, after some of the most ferocious and costly fighting in the history of the Corps, Marines began climbing the steep sides of the volcano. At 1015 an advance party bearing an American flag reached the rim of the crater, by then littered with the bodies of dead Japanese. A Marine found a long piece of pipe, and his buddies attached the flag. With a heave they raised the pipe. From the beach far below the Stars and Stripes suddenly came into view. Marines cheered and punched one another. Some were in tears. Ships off the coast blasted horns and whistles.

With the advance party on the top of Hotrocks was Sgt. Louis Lowery, a Marine combat photographer from *Leatherneck*. As the Marines raised the flag Lowery began snapping photos. Just when the pipe was erect, two Japanese charged from a hidden cave. One lobbed a grenade at Lowery, who leaped into the crater and tumbled down 50 feet. In the fall his camera was smashed, but the film miraculously escaped undamaged.

Lt. Col. Chandler Johnson, who had sent the flag to the top of Hotrocks, looked up and said, "Some son-of-a-bitch is going to want that flag but he's not going to get it." Johnson then ordered the original flag brought down and a much larger one put in its place.

The second flag raising was also photographed, this time by Joe Rosenthal from the Associated Press. Rosenthal joined the second flag-raising party at the last minute and purely by happenstance. When the Marines reached the top of Hotrocks and began hoisting the pipe, Rosenthal was caught off guard. He didn't even have time to look into his camera's viewfinder and could do nothing more than quickly point the camera and snap. After the pipe was standing tall, Rosenthal had the Marines gather for another photo.

His film, which included dozens of photos, was sent off to Guam for developing. As the images began to appear one of the men in the lab exclaimed, "Here's one for all time!" Others were similarly impressed, and they electrographically transmitted the photo to the States. It reached home just in time for the Sunday paper and was splashed across front pages from coast to coast. The image of the flag raising became *the* photo of World War II.

A war correspondent in the Pacific asked Rosenthal if he had posed the shot. Thinking that the correspondent was referring to the photo of the Marines gathered around the flagpole, Rosenthal answered in the affirmative. When Rosenthal became aware of his error, he corrected himself and said *the* photo was absolutely not posed—that it was simply one he had rapidly snapped. He hadn't known if he had gotten anything at all.

Back in the States, Rosenthal talked about the flag raising on radio shows and wrote about it in newspapers and magazines. Moreover, there was a Marine combat cameraman, Sgt. William Genaust, who filmed the entire sequence. We have the film—in color no less. I watched it many times in the 50's and have a copy of it today. Nothing was staged or rehearsed. But none of this mattered to leftists, who seized upon Rosenthal's unwitting statement and have been running with it ever since.

Rosenthal always minimized his contribution: "I took the picture. The Marines took the island." They paid a horrific price for taking that small piece of real estate in the Pacific. Half of those in Rosenthal's iconic photo died on Iwo. Sergeant Genaust died on Iwo. More than 7,000 Americans died on Iwo. More than 19,000 were wounded. The fighting raged for another month after the flag raising. Ralph Willis was one of the few who was not killed or wounded badly enough for evacuation and fought through to the end of the campaign. Twenty-three Marines and four Navy Corpsmen were awarded the Medal of Honor, fourteen receiving it posthumously. "On Iwo Island," said Adm. Chester Nimitz, "uncommon valor was a common virtue." ◁

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Envy and the Consumerism of the Have-Nots

Against the Chicken Snakes

by Tom Landess

You can make a good argument that, by the late 20th century, the Seven Deadly Sins had become the Seven Lively Virtues. In the 1960's, the media lauded the anger of students who bombed police stations and set dormitories on fire. Hollywood glorified lust the way it had once glorified chastity. Government at every level subsidized sloth. As for gluttony, for years the *Guinness Book of World Records* celebrated eating and drinking excesses, including such categories as "heaviest cat." An ex-president of the United States said on national television that "greed is good." Black pride came to be regarded as the quintessential virtue of that community (though white pride is still the deadliest of all sins). But envy is the little engine that drives left-wing politics in America, the cash cow of the Democratic Party, Pavlov's bell.

In the rush to denounce the consumerism of the middle class, we often forget the degree to which the folks who live in untidy neighborhoods and buy groceries off the discount table likewise share in our national obsession with getting and spending. As a country, we've always forgiven the poor for wanting things that bankers and doctors take for granted—indeed, congratulated them for their raw envy. At the same time we've condemned the rich for enjoying those very same things. One of the unspoken assumptions underlying our democracy is that until you're "well off," you're miserable. Our popular songs repeat the phrase "as happy as a king," and nobody seems to question the simile. Charles I? Louis XVI? Nicholas II?

I remember sitting in an Army infirmary, waiting for a pill (that's all they ever gave you) while doctors performed an autopsy on a major. The nurse told us that he'd committed suicide, and that the procedure wouldn't take much longer. I was sitting next to a private who looked to be in his late 40's, the Man With the Hoe in fatigues.

When he heard what was going on, he turned to me, shook his head, and said, "Jeez, why would a major want to kill himself?" He couldn't imagine a problem that being a major wouldn't solve. I suspect a reservoir of unacknowledged envy lay behind that question—a desire to be a dues-paying member of the officer's club, to be chauffeured about in a jeep, and (above all) to buy the things a major's pay would buy.

Poet Edwin Arlington Robinson deals with the same phenomenon in "Richard Cory," a poem that increasingly tricks ideological critics into regarding it as an attack on wealth and privilege. It is anything but that.

In the first stanza, the anonymous speaker tells us he represents the poor folks, who view the rich, polished Richard Cory with unapologetic awe:

> Whenever Richard Cory went to town,
> We people on the pavement looked at him:
> He was a gentleman from sole to crown.
> Clean favored, and imperially slim.

Through the use of the words *crown* and *imperially*, the poet hints at a submerged metaphor that almost surfaces in the third stanza: Richard Cory as king and the people as subjects.

> And he was rich—yes, richer than a king,
> And admirably schooled in every grace:
> In fine, we thought that he was everything
> To make us wish that we were in his place.

Rich and debonair, Cory becomes for the "people on the pavement" the ideal to which they can only aspire. Is their attitude simply wistful fantasizing, or is it envy—bitter, pure, and unappeased? The next stanza answers that question and also by implication rebukes the people for their mulish belief in the superficialities of life.

> So on we worked, and waited for the light,
> And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
> And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
> Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Why did Richard Cory kill himself? Unrequited love? It happens even to the rich and debonair; but not, insofar as we can tell, to Richard Cory. Mental illness? No evidence of that. Latent homosexuality? A popular choice today, I'm sure, though nothing in the text even hints at a motive for suicide. That's because the poem isn't about Richard Cory. It's about "the people," about the proletariat that Karl Marx and Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg so shamelessly sentimentalize—and about a pervasive envy, rooted in simplistic materialism.

We recognize and condemn this materialism in, say, Ebenezer Scrooge, and all the more easily because it is to-

Contributing editor Tom Landess is the author of several books, some of which have appeared under his name.

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tally absent in Bob Cratchit, who, living in poverty, offers a toast at Christmas dinner to his money-grubbing employer: "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast." No envy there. But when we see Scrooge's vice alive and well in the poor, we immediately begin to manufacture excuses, to transform vice into virtue, even to baptize a deadly sin and welcome it into the Body of Christ.

Secular society deals with that broiling envy in at least two ways. The free market—trafficking in illusion—offers imitations of the luxuries the upper-middle class and rich enjoy.

Suburban developments feature three-bedroom, two-bath houses with gables, turrets, and jacuzzis. Garages built on the side extend the width of the house and appear from the street to be extra rooms, particularly when the garages have curtained faux windows.

Rich folks have hideaways in exotic places. Therefore, blue-collar workers and retirees, living on fixed incomes, can buy one fiftieth of a condominium through a time-sharing plan. They can use their tiny square of heaven for a specified week once a year—just so Madge can tell the girls at the beauty parlor, "Clyde and I are flying down to Florida tomorrow to spend a week at our condo."

You can buy knockoffs of Rodeo Drive clothes on the streets of major cities and in flea markets everywhere. On Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, Hermes scarves go for a ten-dollar bill; and a flea-market dealer in South Carolina sells Ferrari fold-up sunglasses for three bucks, while the same pair is selling for $100 to $200 in New York City. Fake designer purses (Kate Spade, Chanel, Prada) are everywhere, supercilious smiles on their faces, pretending to be the real thing.

The Franklin Mint can turn a trash collector into a collector of fine art for only three payments of $19.95—plus shipping and handling.

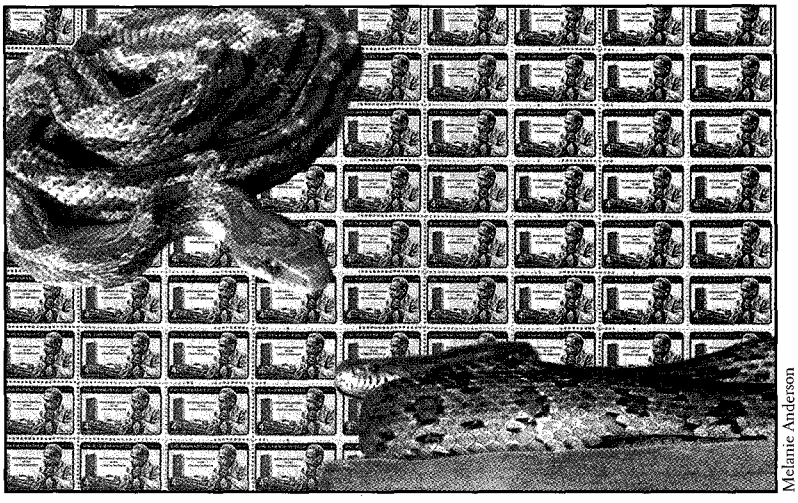
At discount furniture stores you can get sleigh beds, Chippendale chairs, Charles X reclamiers, and hand-woven Indian rugs. And you won't have to pay a penny for the next 18 months—nothing down, no interest.

This is what the free market offers: to bridge the perennial gap between haves and have-nots in America. It seems like a pretty good solution to the problem of rampant envy—that seemingly irrepressible urge to have what you can't afford. It's like the Wizard of Oz giving the Tin Man a mechanical heart that ticks away but pumps no blood. The Tin Man is happy as a king. "God's in his Heaven— / All's right with the world."

Yet viewed from another perspective, this hawking of the American Dream is outright fraud—the sale of delusions and debased dreams, the mainstream equivalent of those greasy little men who step out of alleys and offer you a genuine Rolex for only $50. Thus the left cries: "American business shouldn't prey on lower-income Americans by encouraging them to believe they live in a classless society. Where is government, our old leveler, when we need it?"

And government replies: "Over here. Leveling as hard as we can": subsidizing housing for middle-income renters so they can rub elbows with a better class of neighbors; subsidizing certain farms, eight percent of which are owned by honest-to-god farmers, so they can compete with the other eighty percent (down-home folks like Archer Daniels Midland and Prudential Life); providing scholarships and loans for the semiliterate, so they can learn in college what they failed to learn in elementary school and become doctors, lawyers, and billionaire computer geeks like Bill Gates; and electing our 44th president, who tells us he intends to "spread the wealth around."

It took the old socialist George Bernard Shaw to epitomize this too-familiar philosophy of government: "When you rob Peter to pay Paul, you will always have the support of Paul." Indeed, these days Paul is legion; and tens of millions of Pauls are receiving stolen goods. The levelers call it social justice.



Melanie Anderson

They claim the free market is too cruel to be legal. It's like standing by, watching a chicken snake swallow a mouse. What chance does the poor mouse have in a merciless, God-abandoned world? Let's outlaw chicken snakes! Or better yet, impose a 40-percent food tax on mice so that chicken snakes can barely afford to eat them. Then use the tax revenues to fund an ad campaign warning mice to steer clear of chicken snakes.

This analogy assumes that social and economic manipulators intervene in nature purely out of sympathy for the mouse. This is not necessarily the case. Indeed, all such interventions may be motivated to some degree by a deep-seated, visceral envy of the chicken snake.

Despite protests to the contrary, deep in their soiled hearts, American leftists hate a winner and desperately want to see him toppled. Their attitude is something more than a natural sympathy for the underdog. You sometimes get a glimpse of green-skinned malice in their political rhetoric and actions.

For example, in 1962, collector Leonard Sherman of New Jersey bought three sheets of U.S. four-cent stamps

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honoring Dag Hammarskjold. On one sheet, the yellow background was printed upside down. The estimated value of that one misprinted sheet: $500,000. Sherman made the mistake of telling the press about his purchase; and before sundown, J. Edward Day, Kennedy's postmaster general, heard about Sherman's good fortune and immediately ordered the postal service to print an additional 400,000 of the upside-down sheets for sale to the public. In so doing, Day reduced the worth of Sherman's misprinted stamps to just a little more than four cents each.

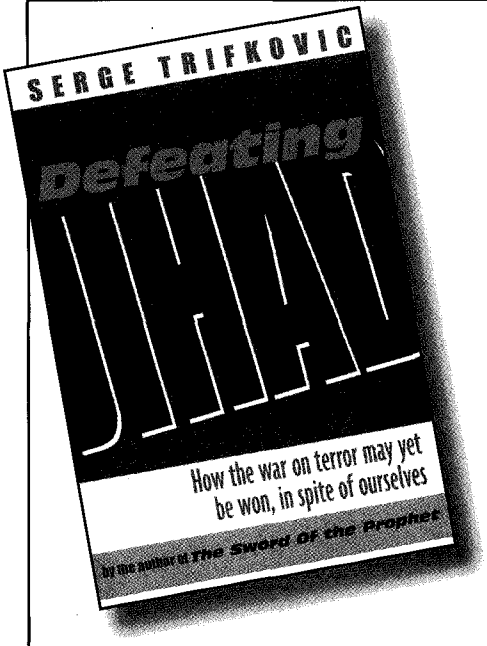
Note that collectors—who in four hours gobbled up 320,000 sheets of Day's supplementary printing—got nothing of real value. With the snap of one bureaucrat's finger, a rarity became a commonplace. Day couldn't have believed he was enriching anybody. He must have known he was arbitrarily confiscating the newly acquired wealth of a single collector, who, as it turned out, was a man of modest means. Here was that rare situation in which he could actually allow one person to prosper without depriving someone else as a consequence. He wasn't robbing Peter to pay Paul.

So what motivated Postmaster Day to rob Peter? It wasn't empathy for low-income stamp collectors. Day did not come from the wrong side of the tracks to go from rags to riches, like Horatio Alger's Jed, the Poorhouse Boy. He graduated from the University of Chicago and Harvard Law School, and then practiced law and made a lot of money. Regardless of how rich they are, these leftists always seem to empathize with envy, which has become the chief political virtue of their Democratic base, the one quality that turns out their voters in hailstorms and blizzards. Their slogan: Don't let the filthy rich get in!

With Day it had to have been a kind of vicarious envy, a pinched vision of the world as consisting of wicked exploiter and powerless victim. If he couldn't give all impoverished stamp collectors a half-million dollars, at least he could sell them the same sheet of stamps and deny that son of a bitch Leonard Sherman something he, by god, didn't deserve. Be assured that Postmaster Day—who'd never met Leonard Sherman—knew precisely what evil lurked in the heart of a stamp collector worth $500,000. Wouldn't it be nice if every stamp collector had exactly the same stamps? Wouldn't those philatelist conventions be lovefests?

Underlying the apotheosis of envy are the unspoken assumptions that the ills of society are the result of economic exploitation, that everyone is playing an inevitable role in a gray historical drama, that no player is responsible for what he does. In the end, all of us will have everything or nothing. Either way, we will live in a just society. In the meantime, however inevitable all this may be, the envious will remain virtuous, and the rich wicked. Obviously, Americans in huge numbers believed in some part of that odd account of the world this past November. It will be interesting to see what they believe four years from now. ◈

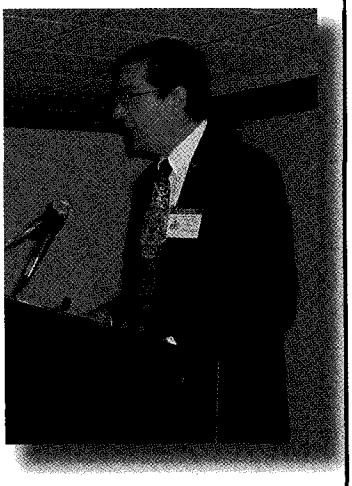
From the author of *The Sword of the Prophet*


SERGE TRIFKOVIC
Defeating
JIHAD
How the war on terror may yet be won, in spite of ourselves
by the author of The Sword of the Prophet

*"The victory will come not by conquering Mecca for America but **by disengaging America from Mecca** and by excluding Mecca from America. Eliminating the risk is impossible. Managing it wisely, resolutely, and permanently is something attainable."*

Defeating Jihad

by Srdja Trifkovic



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The Obesity Epidemic

Remembering Small Rewards

by Gregory McNamee

Melanie Anderson

It is a sign of the times that one of the most talked-about reality-TV shows of the season centers on a woman who desires to lose weight. Lots of weight. The show's star, Ruby Gettinger, now tips the scales at around 500 pounds, having once climbed to 700. She has adult-onset diabetes, thyroid problems, and an enlarged heart. But Miss Gettinger aims to weigh a mere 145 pounds by the time *Ruby* wraps; she has already lost 100 pounds through a combination of diet and exercise—and therapy, since 700-pound or even 400-pound people are rarely happy. She lives in Georgia—which is telling, because the South, for various reasons, is the epicenter of obese America. Just as tellingly, when she hits her ideal weight, she will likely go to Los Angeles.

Miss Gettinger is not alone. Though, admittedly, not many people weigh as much as she does, fully a quarter of all Americans are clinically obese. In no state are fewer than 15 percent of residents badly overweight. In 30 states, the figure is 25 percent. In Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee, 30 percent of adults have a body mass index of 30 or greater, that index being a measure of weight against height, so that a 150-pound person five-and-a-half feet tall would have a BMI of about 24, considered normal—with 30 considered obese.

Now, the causes of obesity are complex. Some of it has to do with the dumb luck of genetics. Some of it has to do with the healthy functioning of the hypothalamus, which keeps track of how much food energy we have used and how much we need, and which is apt to go haywire once tricked by one cheeseburger too many; humans are notorious for ignoring the signals the hypothalamus sends, for which reason, it seems, we eat by the clock instead of by when we are truly hungry. And some of it has to do with chronic stress, a problem in postindustrial and developing countries alike; in time of psychological burden, our bodies instruct *eat*, and so we do.

There are other reasons. One is a product of our economic and social organization: Most Americans who work do so at sufficient distance from home to require motorized transportation, and thus do not benefit from walking. Strapped for time, most exercise less than the recommended half-hour a day. In the truck-farm economy of yore, leanness was our natural condition; now that our lives are spent indoors, tethered to desk, phone, and keyboard, the ounces and pounds are ever harder to shake off. This is true of every country in which knowledge work and commuting figure heavily in the economy—not just the United States, but these days every nation in Western Europe and, increasingly, those of East Asia, where girth was once the exclusive province of deities and dictators.

Obesity has a class component, an ethnic component, a geographic component. It targets the poor, who are likely to spend their food money on heavily processed, high-fat food that seems to deliver bang for the buck, even if the calories are "empty"—a bag of cheese puffs, say, instead of a bag of carrots. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, an illuminating if necessarily alarming compendium of data, obesity prevalence is lowest among college gradu-

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Gregory McNamee is the author of Moveable Feasts: The History, Science, and Lore of Food, *among many other books.*

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ates (at 22.1 percent) while highest among those with less than a high-school diploma (at 30 percent). It is higher by several percentage points among blacks than whites. It is highest in the South (27.3 percent) and Midwest (26.5 percent), where Jell-O is considered a vegetable, and lowest in the West (23.1), particularly Colorado, where body consciousness is more pronounced than anywhere else in America, even California.

Ending misplaced subsidies should be a goal of policymakers. Making fresh foods more affordable should be a goal of local growers and consumers. Americans should finally recognize the wisdom of the Jeffersonian agrarian ideal and plant food gardens everywhere that it is feasible to do so, Victory Gardens to declare war against those who would do us harm with bad food trucked in at great distances courtesy of imported fuel. Along the way, restoration of the notion of gluttony as a sin might be in order, too.

Obesity, as Miss Gettinger's therapist rightly recognizes, has a psychological component as well. Those who overeat often have no idea of how they behave in the face of food, but scientists do. In one recent study coordinated by Cornell University, the center of some of the best food-related research in the country, 213 diners were placed in the Petri dish of several all-you-can-eat Chinese restaurants in various parts of the country. Those diners who were obese tended to sit facing the buffet, as if to make sure it wasn't going to disappear, and to sit an average of 16 feet closer to it than did their normal-weight peers. Yet, on being told of their behavior, none of those obese diners was aware of having made any choices on where he sat and how he ate. Blame it on some feast-and-famine ancestral memory from the distant past, or on some need to exercise as much control as possible over one's environment; the point is, as one researcher remarked, there is an obvious correlation between too much convenience and too many calories. Given our collective preference for the path of least resistance, the weight consequences are small wonder—as is the enduring popularity of all-you-can-eat Chinese buffets, awful as most of them are.

Finally, and here I risk seeming unkind, there is the infantilism factor in the prevalence of obesity, by which I mean this: When I was young, a couple of generations ago, such fattening things as soda pop and candy bars were firmly tucked away in the great semantic domain marked "treat." They were not for everyday use, but instead the stuff of leisure and reward: Come Saturday, way back in the days of the Johnson administration, and I would be rewarded with a quarter with which to go to a double-feature matinee, complete with a small bag of popcorn, a small beverage, and a small piece of chocolate of some sort. I place due emphasis on two keywords here, *small* and *reward*, concepts that seem to have been lost in our time, when so many of us seem to think that it is part of our birthright to drink many times daily from great tubs of high-fructose soda and eat supersized portions of heavily processed foods—to say nothing of being entertained our every waking hour, courtesy of a popular culture designed, as the literary critic Morse Peckham once observed, to keep us from becoming aware of what is happening to us.

Why should those of us who are not obese care about those who are? Well, for one thing, those who are obese—and especially those who develop obesity-related illnesses such as type II diabetes in adulthood—burden an already overtaxed healthcare system. Put another way, in the end, those who consume more calories consume more healthcare services. The costs tend to be averaged out in higher healthcare costs for everyone, since insurers have proved reluctant to charge higher premiums to cover lifestyle-related illnesses (that is, those having to do with behavior such as smoking, excessive drinking, overeating, and the like). If it is true that governments have taken a nanny stance about such things as smoking indoors and railing drunkenly on the sidewalk, they have shied from the more complex underlying issues lest they be perceived as discriminatory, for which reason a lean, steadily exercising, morally blameless person will pay the same premium as one who lives on fat, carbohydrates, and booze, soothing though that diet may seem.

Given the distaste with which most Americans regard the nanny state, efforts to reduce the obesity epidemic will have to dance around many sensitivities—cultural, psychological, ethnic, ethical, economic, geographic. One of the most interesting efforts has come from that most sensitive of areas, Berkeley, California, courtesy of Alice Waters, the celebrated chef, author, and owner of Berkeley's renowned Chez Panisse, a restaurant that uses only fresh, organic ingredients purchased from local growers. Inspired by a Bay Area program in which prisoners were allowed to establish gardens at local jails—which also sowed ideas of responsibility and yielded a marked decline in recidivism—Waters lobbied the administration of a Berkeley middle school to allow her to tear up an old blacktop and establish what she called The Edible Schoolyard. The one-acre organic garden produces a wide range of vegetables throughout the year, thanks to the Bay Area's generally clement weather. But what is more important, the school's students are active in growing that food, harvesting it, and preparing and cooking it, teaching them valuable skills and lessons that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Waters observes, for instance, that children tend to be suspicious of and avoid many kinds of vegetables, especially those that are unfamiliar to them. (How many kids these days know what a turnip is, for instance?) But if they have grown the plant

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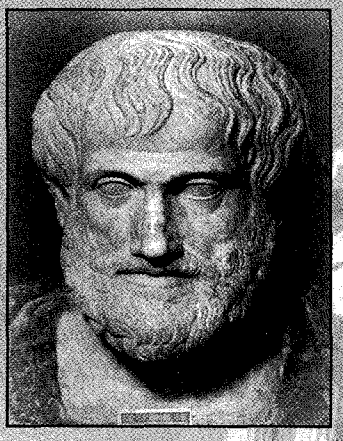
and their teachers have helped them research its history and culture, the chances are much better that they will eat it without hesitation—good news for those who know the benefits of a diversified diet.

The Edible Schoolyard program, now about ten years old, is costly on the face, since a healthy diet is inherently more expensive than one made up of mass-produced starches, sugars, and fats. It is sure to realize savings in terms of healthcare costs over a lifetime, however, by turning children away from junk food and toward healthy produce. There are other virtues, too. For one, in a time when few families eat even a single meal together each day, growing and preparing food allows children what is now a rare privilege: sitting down and dining in company, one of the hallmarks of civilization. For another, the benefits that would accrue to small-scale agriculture are many: As Waters notes, if schoolchildren—20 percent of the population—were fed organic, locally grown foods, then growers would have a huge new market as "people again grew up learning how to cook affordable, wholesome, and delicious food."

The Edible Schoolyard program may take a long while to reach every corner of the country. In the meantime, the present ailing economy will likely induce most school districts—and, indeed, most consumers—to make poor food choices in the interest of maximizing their food dollar. Our exceedingly strange system of agricultural subsidies supports just those poor choices, favoring producers of such things as processed grain, corn syrup, and livestock while discouraging producers of fresh produce and fruits, such that the more "energy dense" a food is—the more laden with sugars and fats, that is—the cheaper it will be per calorie on the supermarket shelf. It is possible, at least in the short term, for an adult American to get his required calories for under a dollar per day, consuming a diet of, say, prepared cereal or canned chili, whereas a diet that delivers the same calories in a more healthful and various form can cost orders of magnitude more. As one report notes, for instance, the sugar in fresh raspberries costs nearly 100 times more than refined cane sugar.

Ending misplaced subsidies should be a goal of policymakers. Making fresh foods more affordable should be a goal of local growers and consumers, and here I harbor a long-standing Voltairean dream in which Americans finally recognize the wisdom of the Jeffersonian agrarian ideal and plant food gardens everywhere that it is feasible to do so, Victory Gardens to declare war against those who would do us harm with bad food trucked in at great distances courtesy of imported fuel. Along the way, restoration of the notion of gluttony as a sin might be in order, too. Combine that with a little more exercise, sitting farther away from the buffet, and choosing a glass of water over a trough of pop, and there may be hope for our groaning, huffing compatriots as they fight the endless battle of the bulge. Stay tuned. ©



The Greek Conservative Mind

The Greeks invented political philosophy . . .
but not out of thin air

The ancient Greeks liberated themselves from the shackles of religion and tradition to pursue a dream of democracy, equality, and human rights. Right?

Wrong. We do well to remember the Greeks as they really were: their aristocratic pursuit of virtue, their general disdain for democracy, and their strong attachments to family and religion.

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Home Church

by Aaron D. Wolf

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

—Daniel 6:10

With the election of Democrat Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States, I've watched a number of friends, family members, and acquaintances—conservative Christians, every one—come unglued. It would seem that this is the end of America As We Know It and the beginning of the Age of Antichrist. "I keep telling myself that God is in control!" was said or blogged by more than several of them.

"What does this mean?" I ask along with Luther's Small Catechism. Yes, God is in control. He is in control here, just as he was during the Bush administration, the Clinton administration, the Bush administration, and the Gorbachev administration. His sun shines and His rain falls on the just and the unjust, and sometimes He even sends the Assyrian "against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets."

These days, Christians in America seem more politically minded than ever before. We blogged about this election, passed out voters' guides for this election, anguished over this election, and prayed for John McCain to win this election. We went to sleep with the sound of portentous FOX News in our ears.

"In the evening, when you go to bed, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say: In the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen." Thus begins the section on bedtime prayer in the Small Catechism. After the Creed and the Our Father are three short sentences.

> I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day, and I pray Thee to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.

A child can say those words; they are easy for young minds to memorize. They make a sweet conclusion to a bedtime ritual that includes a story, a hug, and a kiss. Luther concludes, "Then go to sleep promptly and cheerfully."

But sleep doesn't come easy, here in God's country. We have busy schedules and much to worry about. The condition is reflected in an all too American metaphor: We have too much on our plates. And while a gracious Lord sends His holy angel, we just don't have the time to notice that he's there.

Time marches on, and the children continue to grow, but today it all proceeds at a hectic pace. The passing of seasons and days is marked by schedules and scheduling conflicts. We have too much on plates that are passed to us through drive-thru windows, that balance on our laps in the TV room, that go from freezer to microwave. We hit PAUSE or MUTE so we can say grace. *God is good God is great thank Him for the food we ate—aye-men.*

"The children and servants shall go to the table with folded hands and reverently, and say: The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord; and Thou givest them their meat in due season; Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Obeying this admonition from the Catechism requires faith as well as something that was a commonplace in Luther's day: a family gathered around a table. And to avoid hypocrisy when beginning the prayer with that passage from Psalm 145, the family must engage in good husbandry, as the Catechism notes: "To *satisfy the desire* means that all animals receive so much to eat that they are on this account joyful and of good cheer; for care and avarice hinder such satisfaction." Whither my Double Whopper with Cheese king-sized value meal? "Then the Lord's Prayer . . . " By the time we get to the actual petition for the Lord's blessing, it's starting to feel like a church service—in terms of both content and duration. "[A]nd the prayer here following: Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts, which we take from Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

Alas, we're just getting started. After dessert and coffee, or when the last fry has been mined from the bottom of the bag, we are, in fact, told to *thank God for the food we ate.*

> Likewise also after the meal they shall reverently and with folded hands say: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. He giveth food to all flesh; He giveth to the

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Aaron D. Wolf is Chronicles' *associate editor.*

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beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.

No, sit back down. We're not finished. I don't care if you're late to tae kwon do. "Then the Lord's Prayer . . ." *Isn't this "vain repetition"? I thought we were Protestants.* "[A]nd the prayer here following: We thank Thee, Lord God, Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for all Thy benefits, who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen."

Imagine that—one of those little services at breakfast, before work and school, and then another when everyone gets home, not to mention prayers upon waking and prayers before sleeping. Who has the time? Or the energy? The whole thing is so . . . otherworldly.

And that is precisely the point.

The Christian Faith emphasizes what some call the "already but not yet." The Kingdom is Christ's, and yet we pray for it to come. Meanwhile, the Word of God penetrates the present darkness, surrounding and infusing His people with light. Most gloriously, on Sundays before the altar, we join with "angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven" to praise God before partaking of a "foretaste of the feast to come."

Yet not all of life is lived in a church service. Very few of us live in a parsonage or a rectory and can walk over to Matins or Vespers or Compline every day. But here in the first term of President Barack Hussein Obama, the veritable Age of Antichrist, we still have a considerable number of freedoms. In particular, we are free to order our lives according to the invisible reality that is the Kingdom of God. Saint Paul's admonition to "pray without ceasing" is not one item on a to-do list to fit into our schedules: It is an encouragement for the faithful to be aware constantly of the presence of God and His angels and His saints here and now, outside the walls of church.

The blessings of the lectionary and the Church calendar are gifts from our tradition designed to counter human frailty. We cannot remember the whole of the history of redemption each and every Sunday. Similarly, the rituals of the Daily Office, or the Catechism, or quiet time, or family Bible hour—once as common among Christians as the family table—provide regular interruptions in our rat race, preventing us from the seemingly benign sin of overscheduling.

This is nothing new for God's people. Captive and enslaved by the pagan Persians, Daniel knelt facing the Holy City and prayed. His friends and his enemies knew where to find him at least three appointed times each day.

Daniel, as you may recall, was a eunuch—he was made "prince of the eunuchs," in fact, against his will. Most American Christian men, on the other hand, are neither slaves nor eunuchs—or at least they weren't before the vasectomy. Like most men throughout time, they have families. Stretching back as far as the patriarch Job (before Moses and perhaps before Abraham), a man was priest of his household. The addition of the Tabernacle some years later, then the Temple, then the synagogue, and their transformation and fulfillment in Christ and His Church, did not mitigate the responsibility of the father.

Church statistics guru George Barna says that, among Protestants, the "churches" that are seeing the most growth in the United States are "home churches." As many as 20 million people, including Barna himself, attend these gatherings of around 20 people each. According to the *Washington Post*, Barna said that home churches "are attractive to those who want to deepen their relationships with God and one another, and they also suit Americans' growing taste for flexibility and control of their schedules."

There is much to deplore in today's churches—pap-filled psychobabble sermons, excruciating pop music, the silliness of dramas and dances—but the fact remains: Home is not church. We can set aside (for the briefest of moments) what this or that denomination may teach about ordination and the sacraments. There is no way to read the history of the early Church or the Pastoral Epistles and conclude that, when things go badly at church, you can start your own at home. What to do, then?

"Mercy! Good God! What manifold misery I beheld!" That was Luther's response when he visited the churches of Saxony. "The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas, many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach." His solution? "The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare this Catechism . . . in this small, plain, simple form." Vivify the churches by vivifying the households!

The Small Catechism does not address individuals—or rather, it addresses one individual: not the pastor, nor the schoolteacher, not the elector (or, for that matter, the president-elect). Each section, including the instructions for daily prayers, begins "As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household." For this to work, then, there needs to be more than a family table. There needs to be a family head. In the divine economy, a man is head of his household, whether he likes or admits it. He is responsible for the continuing spiritual education or formation of wife, children, and even servants (if he has any).

American men prefer a quick and one-sided fix. Bariatric surgery beats diet and daily exercise. Voting will save babies. Eunuchs can better afford to send their kids to college. And yet the days and the seasons and the years continue to pass, the churches become increasingly decadent and irrelevant, and the kids' mouths get smarter. What does this mean?

It means we have to go home. It means that we have to gather around the table. And it means that Dad must take up the mantle of Job as household priest. This might mean taking some things off our plates. At least here, in the Age of Antichrist, we're still free to do that. ◇

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A Home Is for Living, Not for Flipping

Life Beyond the Bubble

by Greg Kaza

The baseball is cracking into Tom Hopps' glove as he plays catch on the sidewalk. Terri Reader is playing next door in her backyard, and Mr. Coyle, one of the millworkers in our neighborhood, is walking out front to inspect his freshly mowed lawn. There is a continuity to these childhood memories that becomes more vivid as time marches across the decades—the 125 steps to Kennedy Park's ball fields in summer and ice rinks in winter; or bike rides around The Block, a three-tenths of a mile rectangle with thirty houses on two sides and another three, including our own, on "the short end."

Did academics count the homes in Levittown? No, they were too busy deconstructing suburbia after World War II. But one tends to notice such minutiae in real neighborhoods where everyone knows his neighbors, including their strengths and weaknesses—like the family names of childhood friends and old paper-route customers on The Block, as lyrical today as they were when I first heard them pronounced five decades ago. You never forget the names—Slav, Irish, German, Italian—or the professions of their parents, whether autoworker or steelworker, construction foreman, preacher, police officer, or teamster. Or the dwellings they lived in and each called home.

Your family home will never be "flipped" like the renovated structures on the popular TV show *Flip This House*. Your home and memories of the old neighborhood are not for sale. They are held close to the heart and cherished. They remain as solid as the bricks in the small home on the street that dead-ends at the railroad tracks next to the factory where Chrysler Corp. has manufactured parts, including engines, since 1954. The parades of tricycle "cars" navigating a chalk replica of the King's Highway 401 (complete with an exit ramp for Trenton, Ontario) after a vacation to Expo '67 in Montreal, Quebec. The transistor radio, lovingly tucked away in a drawer, used to listen to the 1968 World Series that the Tigers won from the St. Louis Cardinals in seven games. The bat from 1969 Bat Day at Tiger Stadium, stored in the garage among the shovels and rakes. The game our team lost by one run at Hedke Park in 1970 that ended our season prematurely, before we could play "under the lights" for the city-league championship. The team that went undefeated and won the championship four years later. The 1974 Plymouth Valiant, with its hometown-built slant-six engine, parked out front after another 4:30 to 6:30 A.M. shift selling the *Detroit Free Press* outside the Chrysler plant each day before high school. The occasional wildcat strike in that plant, and the hard-fought elections at UAW Local 372. The smokestacks of the Edison power plant visible for the first time after the leaves fell from the maple tree in fall. The first home-cooked meal of holupki and pierogi with fried onions and sour cream after returning home from three stints in Washington, D.C. (none that lasted more than a year). The photograph of Dad standing with us on the front lawn the day he retired from Chrysler after 43 years. The woodworking tools that he used to build furniture during 13 years of retirement. Mom's joy as she watched her only granddaughter ride a tricycle on the same strip of concrete her father had ridden in youth. The trips to visit family during Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

A libertarian coworker, a policy wonk childless by choice and laboring for years in Rand's vineyard, once gasped at the sight of this modest house. "That's where you grew up?" One can forgive him for not maturing beyond Dagny Taggart and Howard Roark. The mistake of the libertarians is reducing life—indeed, human existence—to the marketplace. They might decide among themselves, why not make a living and a decent one at that, trading in souls with theists? Or, in the modern adaptation, why not create a market for their securitization? They might look, for inspiration, to Chichikov, in Gogol's great novel. He actually traded in souls. Chichikov's *poshlost* is unrecognizable to American grasshoppers on the lookout for the quick buck, the day trade, the lottery ticket, the house flip. Many college-educated were easy marks for our modern FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) industry sector, backed by the U.S. government, which peddled easy credit (in the form of subprime and Alt-A mortgages) to the tune of champagne wishes and caviar dreams. Many of the skilled tradesmen in the plant, by contrast, did not have the opportunity to earn a formal education beyond high school. But they had enough street savvy to avoid the old Mob-run numbers racket, with its bigger payday based on the daily state lottery. They learned hard economic lessons in their youth during the Great Depression and created families in the postwar era in homes they purchased, and painstakingly acquired, one monthly payment at a time. (Thirty-year mortgage-burning party anyone?) Flipping the family home would have appeared

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as alien to them as 100-percent equity must seem to those DINKs, with mortgages now underwater, trying to stay afloat among us.

How did a housing bubble develop in the United States in the first decade of the 21st century? The causes, many and complex, are beyond the scope of this article, but they might be summarized in one phrase: a consumer market with ample access to easy credit and flawed reasoning. One can sketch the outlines of this recipe for disaster. Start with a central bank (the Federal Reserve) that reasoned, incorrectly, that negative short-term real interest rates, over a multiyear period, would not create the conditions for a financial bubble. Add government-sponsored enterprises (including Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) and private enterprises (including commercial and investment banks and hedge funds) engaged in structured finance with financial derivatives. These enterprises, to generate larger profits, expanded credit in an imprudent manner, assuming that value-at-risk models would perform as well in the real world as in academia. Mix in rampant fraud in FIRE subsectors. Top it off with a naive consumer public that reasoned, incorrectly, that housing prices would continue to increase in bubble markets at annual rates of 15-25 percent. Others were wrong in assuming they could acquire wealth—quickly and infinitely—through such schemes as house flipping. Using credit, a flipper might buy a house with a small down payment, selling it a short time later at a higher price. Flipping, in an inflating market, can work for speculators. But it has left millions of Americans underwater on their mortgages as housing prices have deflated.

Future historians might ponder how it came to pass that the so-called best-educated generation in American history ignored so many lessons learned by their "lesser-educated" elders. The latter knew some history, acquired through personal experience in the Depression or independent reading. The former, apparently, have little or no historical comprehension. The Bible is one source of wisdom. Proverbs 22:7 tells us that "The rich ruleth over the poor: and the borrower is servant to him that lendeth." Matthew 7 teaches that a wise man will build his house upon a rock, and a foolish man will build his house upon the sand. Fewer Americans would have been caught up in the late housing bubble if they had meditated on a few biblical lessons.

"Men, it has been well said," Charles Mackay observed, "think in herds; it will be seen that they go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses slowly, and one by one!" Mackay's 1841 history, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, examines three of the more remarkable financial manias in history: the Dutch tulip mania (17th century), and the Mississippi and South Sea bubbles in the 18th century.

Scottish financier John Law (1671-1729) played the key role in the Mississippi Bubble. The Mississippi Historical Society's Jon Moen writes that Law was "a colorful character who has been described as tall, handsome, and vain. He had a passion for women and gambling." Law's association with the Duc d'Orléans—the nephew of King Louis XIV—ensured his place in financial history:

> In 1716 Law convinced the French government to let him open a bank, the Bank Generale, that could issue paper money, or bank notes. The paper notes would be supported by the bank's assets of gold and silver and would circulate as a medium of exchange. Paper money was a new concept for the French; money to them was silver and gold. Law believed that paper notes would increase the money in circulation, which, in turn, would increase commerce.

Law's sales pitch included the lure of gold and silver, and attracted an eager mob to his Mississippi Company. Moen continues:

> Law paid for these activities and privileges by issuing additional shares in the company. These shares could be paid for with bank notes (from his bank) or with government debt. The value of shares in the Mississippi Company rose dramatically as Law's empire expanded. Investors from across France and Europe eagerly played in this new market. The financial district in Paris became so agitated at times with investors that soldiers would be sent in at night to maintain order. Shares in the Mississippi Company started at around 500 livres tournois (the French unit of account at the time) per share in January 1719. By December 1719, share prices had reached 10,000 livres . . .The market became so seductive that people from the working class began investing whatever small sums they could scrape together. New millionaires were commonplace.

Law's scheme collapsed when he issued more bank notes to fund stock purchases in his company. Some speculators sold shares to convert them to coin, putting downward pressure on the Mississippi Company's share price. Law tried to force people to accept paper notes rather than gold, leading to inflation in France, continued declines in the firm's share price, and Law's ultimate loss of control in the firm he launched.

> The rise and fall of the Mississippi Company became known as the Mississippi Bubble. Indeed, Law is most famous, or perhaps infamous, for his involvement in this prominent financial disaster. A "bubble" in the world of finance is a term applied to an unusually rapid increase in stock prices or the value of some other asset like real estate. The increase is then followed by an equally rapid collapse in prices. The wild fluctuations in prices are usually viewed as irrational and the product of uncontrolled

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speculation rather than sensible investment practices.

Another lesson is that easy access to credit can be imprudent. The greater-fool theory is at play: Buy high and sell higher. One characteristic of bubbles is that speculator returns in additional asset clauses tend to be leveraged with or without the protection of principal. Examples in the United States in the 20th century include the Dow Jones Industrial Average in the mid-to-late 1920's and the NASDAQ in the mid-to-late 1990's. The NASDAQ bubble burst in 2000, and the index has declined 70 percent. Credit-induced bubbles also occur in real estate. The Florida real-estate bubble of the 1920's is perhaps the best American example presaging the current debacle. Yale economist Robert Shiller, an expert on bubbles, terms the current crash "the biggest bubble in U.S. history and possibly even in world history." The Standard & Poor's Case-Shiller Home Price Index provides a sober monthly assessment of house prices and is widely followed in financial markets. But more Americans may be tuned in to *Flip This House*, a production of the A&E Network in its fourth season. Each episode features the purchase, renovation, and flipping of a housing unit. The show declares breathlessly that flipping houses "is the most tried-and-true way to make a fortune in real estate." Participants in house flipping, at its speculative peak in 2006, ranged from Las Vegas busboys to Washington congressional staffers.

One lesson unlearned by many Republicans is that government tends to intervene in the market after bubbles collapse. It is better to administer preventive medicine to the patient before he ends up in the emergency room on life support. Contrary to Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan's repeated claims, it is possible to identify an asset-price bubble in the making when it deviates in a significant manner from the long-term trend.

A home is for living, not for flipping. This is simple wisdom that should be passed down from generation to generation. Dad's father settled in a small home in the lush, verdant hills of western Pennsylvania more than a century ago. Grandpa Kaza had been dead for nearly 60 years before some of his offspring, on their first trip to the old country after the Soviet Union's collapse, realized he chose his new town for its physical resemblance to his native village. Mom's father, in the months before his death, reconstructed the native villages he and his wife hailed from along the Ukrainian frontier. Geede was in his mid-80's but still remembered the family homes, churches, stores, parks, and other features, recording them in colorful detail on large pieces of cardboard. Mom's family purchased their modest home in the New World after World War I. The neighborhood is an interesting mix of Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, and Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler plants. The family, nine decades later, still owns the home. My aunt, an octogenarian, guided me on a walk around the neighborhood, reciting the names of families who lived there in the 1940's as if it were yesterday. She has her own list of neighbors. They are treasured heirlooms and serve as reminders that these houses are homes. They were never investments, and they will not be flipped. ◁

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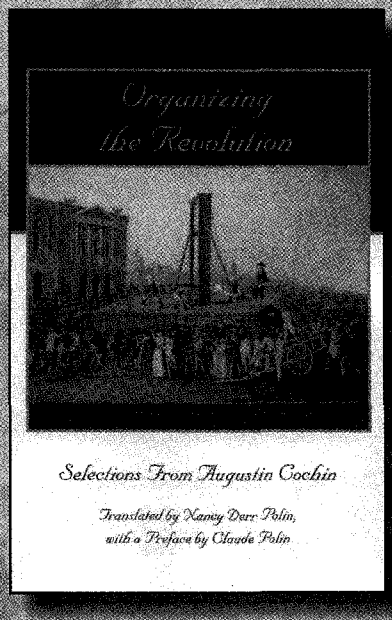
Organizing the Revolution
Selections From Augustin Cochin
Translated by Nancy Derr Polin, with a Preface by Claude Polin

Organizing the Revolution

Selections From Augustin Cochin

translated by Nancy Derr Polin

Preface by Claude Polin

Augustin Cochin (1876-1916) undertook a minute analysis of the role that provincial clubs and societies played in the genesis of the French Revolution. His work shows clearly how the revolution was organized long before the events of 1789. This translation is an attempt to present his unfinished writings in a clear and coherent form.

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Rich Man, Poor Man

Redefining Middle Class for the New Millennium

by Beverly K. Eakman

When the late Tony Snow stepped down from his position as President George W. Bush's press secretary, he explained that he simply could not "make it on $168,000 a year." The comment didn't play well in Peoria.

The media downplays the enormous wealth enjoyed by disgraced chief executive officers of bankrupted companies, special-interest moguls, lobbying giants, and too many members of Congress, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. At the same time, it vastly exaggerates grinding poverty in America, which, compared with that of other nations, is virtually nonexistent.

The middle class, on the other hand, gets no respect.

Both parties know that, of course, and when they attempted to capitalize on it during the 2008 election season, they wound up showcasing their ignorance.

Sarah Palin used the term *middle class* interchangeably with *working class*, which actually equates to *blue collar*. The usually astute Thomas Sowell, in a column criticizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), reported that some people who qualified for the program were making "as much as $80,000"—the implication being that a family making $80,000 is well off and can easily afford health insurance. SCHIP may well be just another redistribution of wealth, but in today's economy, $80,000 does not mean that you are well off.

While it is true that the gap between rich and poor is widening, it is also true that the middle class can no longer buy what it could afford without difficulty just three decades ago. For example, the humble oven in your kitchen and the new energy-efficient furnace in your basement incorporate a sophisticated array of computer chips, electronics, and digital equipment. When something goes wrong, entire motherboards have to be replaced instead of the individual selector switch or thermostat of 30 years ago. The cost of an oven repair, then, ranges from $800 to $1,000; a repairman recently told me that, in the 1950's, 60's, and 70's, that rate topped out at $100.

Built-in obsolescence means that small appliances, from clock radios to coffee pots, must be regularly replaced because they are similarly outfitted with chips and digital electronics and, therefore, are not worth the cost of repair. Many such appliances, in fact, are sealed units, meaning they cannot be opened for repair.

Now consider the drippy bathroom faucet. In 1970, you would have purchased a 50-cent washer and screwed it into the spout yourself; today, for many models, you cannot purchase a washer, much less a mere handle or spout; you must purchase an entire assembly. So when people finally replace bathroom fixtures, they often spring for something attractive. Not "upscale," because anything with porcelain or embedded colors typically runs between $400 and $950. By contrast, a "plain vanilla" faucet at the hardware store costs between $75 and $140, but unless it is going in the basement, most people want something a little prettier.

So, you settle for "attractive," which means your cost is somewhere between $220 and $380. You purchase the set, which comes with directions, and go home.

Next, you attempt to get your old faucet out. You likely discover that at least one of the handles is "frozen" in place by hard-water deposits. That means it cannot be unscrewed (thus the dripping) and will require either a saw or the removal of the sink from the wall. Unless you call a professional, you will probably chip your sink and perform other collateral damage that sets you back hundreds of dollars. Most likely, you already have wasted a day searching for the "attractive" faucet (because everything in your price range is conveniently out of stock). You are in no mood to go on another expedition to replace your sink.

So, you hire a handyman or plumber and pay him another $200. Your "attractive" faucet has now cost you some $420. That is only $150 less than what my mother spent on private-school tuition for me at an international academy for the entire year of 1958.

Figures like these are not reflected in annual inflation statistics (4.1 percent in December 2007), where food, gas, and housing prices (the primary focus) are offset by lower electronics and computer prices—cell phones, Blackberries, plasma TVs, *etc.*

Middle class used to mean living in anything from a plain, two-story brownstone without air conditioning, multiple bathrooms, or finished basements to better digs in now-"exclusive" neighborhoods. Restorations of 18th-

Beverly K. Eakman is a lecturer, columnist, and the author of four books on mental-health issues, data-trafficking, and education. Her latest book is Walking Targets: How Our Psychologized Classrooms Are Producing a Nation of Sitting Ducks.

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century homes, including electrical wiring and plumbing, ran as high as $16,000 in 1958. That figure wouldn't pay for the overhaul of your 1970's-era bathroom today.

The 2008 financial crisis, with its projected $850-billion government bailout, highlights a different sort of "inconvenient truth": Items essential to the middle-class lifestyle were either unknown or unnecessary in pre-1970's America (never mind iPods or Blackberries). Worse, many of these essentials are critical because of government.

No matter what business you are in, if you are among the demographic known to economists as upper-middle, middle-middle, or lower-middle class, you must own at least one personal computer, a cell phone, a shredder, and a handheld planner. Without these, you cannot—you will not—function as a professional. Every company or service call you make—for repairs, credit-card questions, or health insurance—is programmed to urge logging onto the company's website for information. Computers are a given, just like the electronic key locks and seat belts installed in your car, whether you want them or not.

The working-class and unskilled-labor sectors have some leeway on these points, but not much. That is because the "less fortunate" tend to operate on a kind of barter system. A buddy fixes his neighbor's car so that it will pass inspection, with the promise of a return favor when needed. Working-class inspectors are not so picky with this neighbor, unlike the fellow who drives up in a suit and tie.

Failing that, there is always government aid for those who "qualify." Not being able to read or write passably helps ensure "eligibility," and the costs are passed on to taxpayers. The middle class is hit hardest; it is not awash in trust funds, offshore accounts, and "old money."

Your computer is key to your continued existence as a professional, but it is outdated two years from time of purchase, if not before. Yet, as a professional, your letter, document, and business card are expected to be error-free. Computer upgrades are expensive, time-consuming, glitch-laden, and result in a profusion of wires. Thus, more outlays for wireless connectors.

The "less fortunate" are under no such constraints to "stay in business."

Spam (much of it blatantly pornographic) and identity theft require a plethora of encryption packages, firewalls, parental controls, and virus protectors—which, of course, are additional expenses. Oh, and remember to shred all those credit-card come-ons, with your name, address, and other personal information helpfully printed on them.

Meanwhile, caller ID is fast becoming a must-have for every landline telephone to avoid the scores of daily computerized calls soliciting "on behalf of" various causes, surveys, or services. Thanks to computerized soliciting, the national no-call registry was dead on arrival. The "less fortunate" do not receive so many nuisance calls, and the exorbitantly wealthy have others to answer their phones. An answering machine, of course, is embedded into your telephone, so you do not have the option of avoiding that cost.

There are no "freebies" for middle-class wage-earners, and there is no way around the additional taxes to support institutionalized "equality." Exorbitant heating costs? Government rushes to provide a handout. Never mind that the recipients' children are cavorting down the street with a Bluetooth phone headset in one ear, an iPod earbud in the other, and maxed-out credit cards in their pockets. From vouchers to "scholarships" to free prenatal exams, the middle class foots the bills.

When I was a child in the 1950's and 60's, the private academy I attended in Washington, D.C., was geared to the offspring of diplomats and others interested in a structured educational environment. My family was not wealthy. Neither were the children of a significant number of secretaries and typists living off widows' pensions. The sacrifice—about $600 a year—was significant, but those who wanted to could make it.

Today, private schooling typically is out of reach for middle-class families. It is noteworthy that the majority of my 1950's classmates could not manage it for their own kids, even with steady, professional jobs. Salaries have not kept pace with the costs, partly because of the obstacle course of regulations for private schools that require ownership and management by corporations instead of by individuals.

A recent article in the Washington, D.C., *Examiner* set the standard of $200,000 for a moderately wealthy couple's salary (or $150,000 for a single earner). Outright "wealthy" is considered a taxable income of more than $500,000.

A typical secular, private day school in the D.C. metro area costs $18,000 to $22,000 per year, per pupil. In New York City, that figure is higher; in the heartland and the Southwest, costs are somewhat less. Where private schools are fewer, waiting lists are longer. Parochial schools also are cheaper, but most accredited ones are Catholic, and not everyone is Catholic. So, the D.C. metro area, with its hundreds of options, serves as a good baseline.

Let's say that you have two children and make a top-ranking middle-class wage of $200,000 per year. You have no additional large assets, such as a house paid for by your parents as a wedding gift. You do not have employer-provided transportation, or a comprehensive insurance plan like members of Congress. Your net worth consists mostly of basics, and you earned them yourself. You took the trouble to understand the employee-health programs, mutual funds, and pension options, but that's about it.

Sending your two children to a private school for 12 years, then, will cost you $480,000 in tuition.

However, you still have some spending to do. There are books; large annual donations (expected); clothing (not jeans and a T-shirt); and field trips that require hefty out-of-pocket expenses.

That brings the figure up to half a million dollars for

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two youngsters. Over the course of 12 years, $275,000 per child is not a stretch. Three children raises the total to $825,000, which will be more like $850,000 by the time you are finished. You have federal, state, county, property and sales taxes; a mortgage; food; auto maintenance and inspection; appliance repair and replacement; insurance premiums; outlays for orthodontics and dental work; aging parents; occasional trips to the beach; and a pet. Your various savings plans are nonliquid assets. How far do you think $200,000 a year will go?

Suppose you decide against private education and opt for homeschooling. While homeschooling is ideal, in order to be successful you have to be highly organized, committed to keeping a schedule, willing to endure constant oversight by the state—and either be familiar with every subject area or know someone who is.

And public schooling? If you are willing to accept that parents' rights stop at the schoolhouse door, maybe you can handle that. You will have zero control over the prevailing moral and political climate, and neither teachers nor administrators are likely to back you up if push comes to shove. Hooker chic will be the standard dress, and parents who are not politically and socially liberal will be treated as morons (breeders and feeders). This will send a message to your child, who will react, in turn, by questioning your authority and balking at your rules. The school will push heavily for extracurricular involvement by students, so essentially you will not see your child all week—or the pals he or she hangs out with, except when you serve as chauffeur. Neither teachers nor your neighbors are going to tell you that there is a problem unless it is their ox that is being gored. You will have to stay ahead of the curve on what your child does, his or her pals, and watch for controversial curricula. At some point, you probably will have to shell out for a private tutor. Thanks to the prevalence of mind-altering drugs, legal and illegal, the risk of violent assault will be higher—despite invasive pat-downs, metal detectors, and police inspections.

In 2007, the state of Maryland's cumulative tax bill rose by some $40 million specifically to pay for school refurbishments. The higher the tax bite, of course, the less likely parents are to spring for a private or parochial school.

And then there is college.

We Baby Boomers didn't have to have a university degree to secure a good job. Oftentimes, employers valued individual initiative, experience, merit, and commitment more than a framed piece of paper. Today, that piece of paper is an absolute necessity—several pieces, preferably, unless you are an entertainer or a professional athlete.

In the 1960's, some of my friends worked their way through college packing sandwiches for vending-machine companies, collecting garbage for the county, becoming crop-dusters and salesmen in the summers—all to afford a state college. Many parents who could have sent their children to college felt that forcing their heady young high-school graduates to get a job was a reality check. Understanding what jobs were available without a college degree was more important, they thought, than subsidizing four years of frat parties and husband hunting. Working-class families, of course, had no choice but to encourage their youngsters to go to college on their own dime.

Today, none of these jobs could pay tuition, let alone the cost of books, dorm fees, mandatory cell phones, and transportation. One reason why the cost of college is so high is that many of the students who rely on government loans and freebies should not be there. Remedial classes are standard fare at most colleges and universities, again causing prices to rise.

In the 1950's and 60's, groceries were delivered for a small fee, as were pharmaceuticals and dry cleaning. That meant fewer trips in the car, so most families needed, and had, only one vehicle. Now a family needs two cars to get anything done. Dilapidated highways, traffic cameras, speed bumps, and other nuisances ensure that your commute is as miserable as possible.

Obviously, exorbitant wealth makes grocery shopping, pharmaceutical or dry-cleaning delivery, and long commutes more than affordable. Multimillionaires can hire personal assistants and chauffeurs. The poor get public-transit passes.

Long security lines at the airport? The rich can charter a flight or buy a private plane. Power outage? Several backup generators will automatically kick in. Check overdraft? The bank will access other accounts. Spam? Let the secretary deal with it. Painful medical condition? Forget haggling over painkillers or satisfying DEA requirements or divulging embarrassing details one might not want in the newspaper. A quiet word with the doctor will suffice—or a quick trip outside the country.

Long waiting lists for a private school for Suzie? There will be no need to navigate a maze of Mickey Mouse exercises like writing an essay on "What I Like Best About My Child." No forking over financial and employment histories. Extreme wealth allows one to donate substantial sums to the institution of your choice before any mention of enrollment, then hire someone to give Suzie an "aptitude test."

Meanwhile, the middle-class citizen is treated like the lower classes—slapped with "gotcha" fines and nuisance regulations that the Al Gores and Nancy Pelosis of the world wouldn't stand for. When you own a house in Maui, an apartment in New York, and a villa in France, it's easy to be generous with other people's money.

As for the lower classes, pharmaceuticals become magically "manageable," just like housing, food, and credit-card debt.

The 2008 financial crisis, the government bailout of Wall Street, and the rise of fuel prices have merged at a precipitous moment, ensuring that the spectacularly wealthy can continue to obtain services previously extended to the middle class as well. Yet, when the discussion comes around to "energy hogs" and "wanton consumerism," who stands at the end of that pointing finger? ◁©

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by Taki Theodoracopulos

Down Goes the Mammoth

So, the great nation builder is leaving the White House, his vision of a peaceful Middle East just a pipe dream, something poor old W used to know something about. I say poor old W because he was, after all, taken in by his very own Vice President, a treacherous and cowardly man, a character William Shakespeare would have had a lot of fun inventing. Cheney and his neocon plotters established a shadow government, made up the myth of Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, and allowed useful Israel First idiots in the media to do the rest. Five years on, hundreds of thousands on both sides lie dead or crippled for life, millions have become refugees, and Iran is the superpower of the region. Uncle Sam, in the meantime, has a galloping fever that could prove fatal unless radical medication is applied. And those responsible for the mess remain—like herpes—impossible to extricate from the body politic, infecting everyone and everything they come into contact with.

The trouble is no one in this country of ours seems to learn anything from past mistakes. Eight years in Afghanistan have only strengthened the Taliban and enriched those who sell the West drugs—hardly the purpose of our original mission there. The only good thing to report about our failed mission, in a place no foreigner has ever prevailed, is that it may have stopped the crazed Cheney from sending troops to Georgia to fight the big bad Russian bear. Why should Georgia and the Ukraine join NATO? So we can dispatch young Americans to fight for them one day soon?

In the aftermath of the 2008 election, I had a chance to attend a meeting of the Mencken Club in Baltimore, where I was supposed to speak to an audience of learned folk who think along the lines *Chronicles* readers do. I never made it. What was there to say? That it was Republicans who allowed the neocons in our tent in the first place? That it was my mentor Bill Buckley who facilitated them as they pushed out the Sobrans and Brimelows and Buchanans? That it was Republicans who spread false stories about a lady from Alaska ensuring an Obama victory? That it was a GOP president who kept Alan Greenspan as Fed chairman instead of sending him to Hollywood to be Lindsay Lohan's agent? That it is the GOP that is still in denial about neocons and foreign wars? Nah, I "stood" in bed instead. Conservatives lost the battle long ago, when they got infected by the Frums of this world, the Frums being experts in destroying a party or an idea from within.

Does this mean I'm throwing in the towel? Have never done it yet, but I'm thinking of sport. Politics I hate, but when people like myself get so disgusted that they feel like throwing in the white rag, it's time to wake up. The Kristols, Podhoretzes, Frums, and the rest of the grotesque neocons cannot be allowed to prevail. Let's face it. Americans still believe in freedom and democracy, low rather than high taxes, marriage between men and women, strong families, personal liberty, and states' rights. Many of them still see America as a republic, not an empire, and, most important of all, do not believe in open borders and unlimited immigration. The beating the GOP took last November was the result of the Bush administration's cynicism in ignoring the tradition the country was founded on. Amnesty is something dictators grant to those imprisoned for disagreeing with them, not to those who broke the laws of a democracy. America became a great country because of the cohesion of her citizens, not because she is diverse. America became a great country because European-Americans made her great. Yet European-Americans will soon be a minority in the country, as they are in many large American cities and in states such as California and Texas. Multiculturalism in old Europe has led not to integration but to segregation. It was intended to promote tolerance, but it has promoted unease and violence in societies more abrasive, fractured, and intolerant than they once were.

In Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, liberal democracy is in danger. Free speech is at risk, and a combination of political correctness and ethno-religious separatism is eroding the graciousness of civil society. Paris, London, Manchester, Leeds, Marseille, Milan, and other European cities have no-go areas for whites. Is this what we want for our cities? Europe may have lost a shared set of moral values, but do we wish to emulate her? As Pat Buchanan wrote, "How, when tribalism is everywhere ascendant, is diversity a strength?"

Computers, the internet, and satellite television are rapidly changing life. With the new technologies the idea of an autonomous national culture is going down Swanee—and fast. A national culture is predicated on the idea of a canon, from which people share a set of values and references—a public vocabulary, so to speak. I remember the days when a politician could cite the Bible and expect people to know what he was alluding to. If he did that today he'd probably be brought up on charges by some diversity ombudsman. We conservatives have been infected by foreign bodies, as has the GOP. We need new ideas for policies, and we need to go back to basics. Otherwise, they will one day resurrect us as they are about to resurrect the mammoth. ©

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Tales From the Dark Side

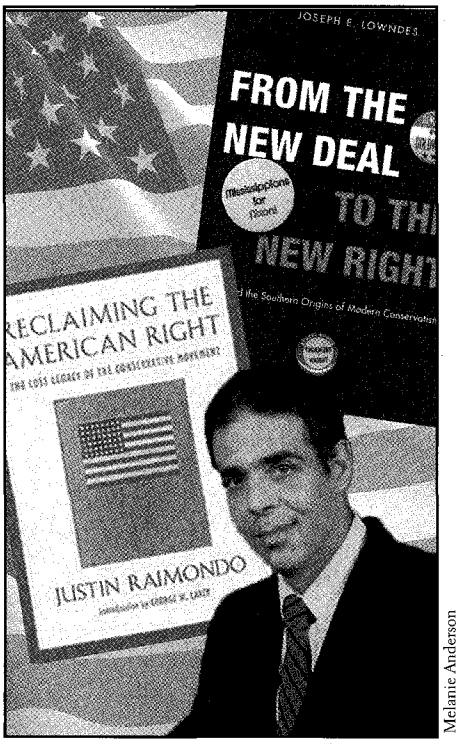
by Tom Piatak

"All great peoples are conservative; slow to believe in novelties; patient of much error in actualities; deeply and forever certain of the greatness that is in law, in custom once solemnly established, and now long recognized as just and final."

—Thomas Carlyle

Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement
by Justin Raimondo
Wilmington, DE: ISI Books; 375 pp., $18.00

From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism
by Joseph Lowndes
New Haven: Yale University Press; 224 pp., $35.00



Melanie Anderson

Both Justin Raimondo's *Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement* and Joseph Lowndes' *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism* tell stories that the mainstream conservative movement, exemplified by *National Review* and *The Weekly Standard*, does not want told. Raimondo's book focuses on the men and women who opposed both the New Deal and America's entry into World War II, while Lowndes charts how former Dixiecrats were assiduously courted by an earlier incarnation of *National Review* and helped Barry Goldwater win the Republican nomination, and Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, the presidency. Both isolationists and traditional Southern conservatives are deeply embarrassing to the current tenders of the conservative flame; indeed, their less-educated acolytes who swarm about the internet most likely do not even know that serious men of the right ever opposed FDR's drive to war or Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of civil rights, believing instead that such opposition must have come from the "liberal fascists" of Jonah Goldberg's imagination.

That is where the similarity between the two books ends. Raimondo's book has been reissued by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, with a valuable new introduction by George Carey and incisive, scholarly essays by Scott P. Richert and David Gordon, because it is a modern classic: Raimondo tells his story in clear, readable prose, with real understanding of and sympathy for his subjects. Lowndes, by contrast, makes no effort to understand how most Southerners once came to hold views he despises, and his thoroughgoing leftism cannot be obscured by his sometimes jargon-laden text.

To give Lowndes his due, he does prove his central point: Southern support was indispensable to the electoral triumph of modern American conservatism, and that support was won by conservative opposition to at least some aspects of the civil-rights movement. The first tentative steps toward the future fusion of Southern conservatives with the GOP began with opposition by Republicans and Southern Democrats to FDR's Federal Employment Practices Commission, which would have barred racial discrimination by any defense contractor. By the early 50's, Robert Taft was suggesting to Eisenhower that he make Harry Byrd, the Democratic senator from Virginia who advocated "massive resistance" to school integration in the wake of *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, his treasury secretary. In 1957, conservative activist and legal scholar Clarence Manion approached Arkansas Democratic Gov. Orval Faubus, famous for his opposition to *Brown*, to urge him to seek the White House, an

Corresponding editor Tom Piatak writes from Cleveland, Ohio.

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effort that became moot when Barry Goldwater made clear that *Brown* should "not be enforced by arms" because it was "not based on law." Although supportive of voting rights for Southern blacks, Goldwater opposed government-mandated integration and, in a speech written by William Rehnquist, denounced what became the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it violated freedom of association: "Our aim is neither to establish a segregated society nor to establish an integrated society as such. It is to preserve a free society." Goldwater's opposition to federal civil-rights legislation helped him become the first Republican candidate since Reconstruction to win Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Georgia, presaging the eventual Republican conquest of the entire South.

Lowndes also makes clear that it wasn't only Republican politicians who were seeking Southern support based on opposition to federal civil-rights legislation; conservative intellectuals did so as well. As William F. Buckley, Jr., wrote in *National Review* in 1957, in an unsigned editorial,

> The central question that emerges is whether the White community in the South is entitled to take such measures as are necessary to prevail, politically and culturally, in the areas in which it does not predominate numerically. The sobering answer is Yes . . . because, for the time being, it is the advanced race.

NR opened its pages to segregationists like Virginia newspaperman James Jackson Kilpatrick and Georgia Sen. Herman Talmadge, as well as such Southern scholars as Richard Weaver, who, according to Lowndes,

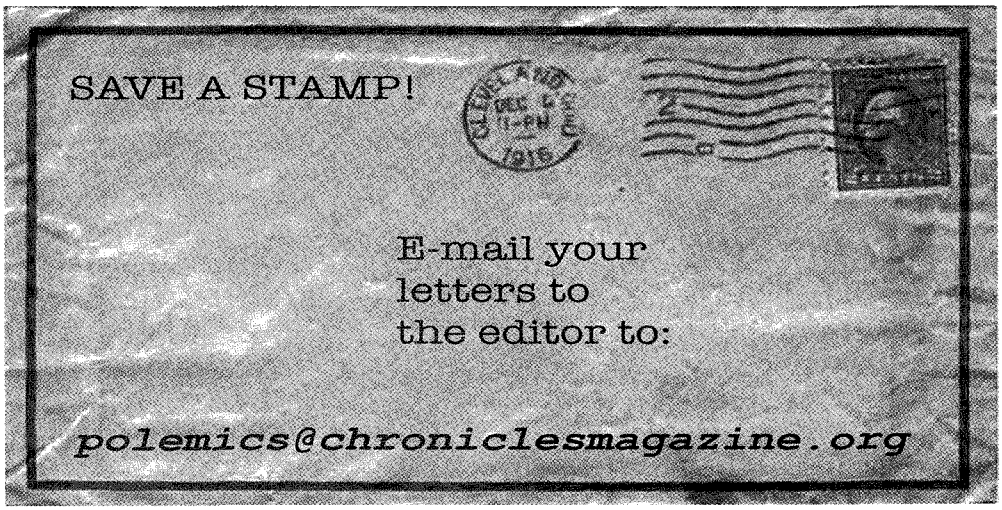
> invested the South with the quality of being the most anti-liberal region of the country, because of its commitment to the preservation of history, "principles of exclusion," and rigid hierarchies.

Now, over five decades after these sentiments appeared in NR, it is clear that such principles no longer animate the South, and it is only permissible to remember that they once did if the South is being castigated. Lowndes begins his book with the story of Trent Lott, who made the mistake of saying, during a celebration of Strom Thurmond's 100th birthday,

> When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all those problems over these years, either.

As Lowndes makes clear, Thurmond was instrumental in the rise of the GOP throughout the South, backing Goldwater in 1964 and helping Nixon win the presidency and fend off George Wallace's challenge in 1968. The Republicans' great debt to Thurmond did not protect Lott from the firestorm of controversy that followed his remarks, with neoconservatives like Jonah Goldberg and Charles Krauthammer rushing to denounce him, President Bush declaring that "Recent comments by Senator Lott do not reflect the spirit of our country," and Lott eventually resigning as Senate majority leader. Three years later, GOP chairman Ken Mehlman went to the NAACP convention to apologize for the party's Southern strategy of the 50's and 60's. Lott's defenders were few, as were critics of Mehlman, because the spirit of defiance displayed by Southerners so often in the past has been largely replaced by a resigned acquiescence in the prevailing wisdom that their forebears were wrong—an acquiescence apparent to all but die-hard leftists like Lowndes, who improbably claims that we have seen a "steady retreat from antiracist political agendas in the past three decades, and with it a more general decline of egalitarian and democratic politics."

Lowndes' incomprehension of reality is not limited to the study of his native South. He cites Theodore White, who wrote that, by 1964, GOP pollsters had found that "the Polish, Slovak, Hungarian, Ukrainian and other groups of Eastern European origin" were "in rebellion against the school bussing of their children and the threatened eradication of their old neighborhoods." Lowndes dismisses this rebellion as "morally dubious," since it rested on the belief that "blacks would change the character of these neighborhoods for the worse." If Lowndes really harbors such doubts, I invite him to take up residence in several formerly ethnic neighborhoods in my native Cleveland and to send his children to the local public schools. Later on, he quotes an Eastern European supporter of George Wallace in Milwaukee, who told black demonstrators that he was supporting Wallace because of the increase in crime he had seen in his neighborhood, including the muggings of a friend and of old ladies. According to Lowndes,



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this person was not reciting particular grievances based on personal experience but expressing anxiety "at the thought that [his] newly established white racial status and its attendant privileges might be imperiled." Of course, since Lowndes elsewhere refers to "an alleged spike in the crime rate" in the 1960's, it is easy for him to dismiss desires to protect neighborhoods from crime as rooted in fantasy, at best, and bigotry, at worst.

Raimondo's history of a different strain of American conservatism is refreshingly devoid of such cant. He writes about figures who had largely been forgotten by the time his book first appeared 15 years ago, but the narrative he constructs out of their stories has been hugely influential in helping to shape paleoconservative discourse. Raimondo notes that "the neocons' antecedents are to be found on the far left, in the movement of Marxist dissidents founded by the American followers of Leon Trotsky," and he supports this conclusion in his study of American Trotskyite Max Shachtman and his followers, who included "Irving Kristol, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Seymour Martin Lipset, Martin Diamond, Irving Howe, Michael Harrington, [and] James T. Farrell." Far from being harmlessly idealistic, Trotskyism was a murderous creed. After consolidating power, Stalin carried out "his 'left turn,' collectivizing the land, 'liquidating' the kulaks, launching an industrialization program, and generally doing all the things the Trotskyists had been urging." The distant ideological descendants of the Trotskyites today "invoke the incantatory power of the magic word 'democracy' to justify any and every U.S. intervention" and "preach a new globalism that is messianic, universalist, and utterly subversive of the American character." Raimondo also underscores the centrality to the neocons of their belief in their own intellectual superiority. He cites Christopher Lasch, who wrote of the first generation of neoconservatives,

> The student of these events is struck by the way in which ex-communists always seem to have retained the worst of Marx and Lenin and to have discarded the best. The elitism which once glorified intellectuals as a revolutionary avant-garde now glorifies them as experts and social technicians.

Raimondo contrasts this globalism and elitism with the nationalism, populism, and opposition to big government of such exemplars of the pre-World War II right as Garet Garrett, John T. Flynn, and Col. Robert McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*. The beliefs of such men grew out of the America in which they lived:

> Old Right politics was simply an expression of Old Right culture—a culture that valued achievement, hard work, self-improvement, independence, self-discipline, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

As a consequence, these men opposed, in Garet Garrett's phrase, the "mountains of debt and loss of liberty" that accompanied the New Deal. They were also marked by a thoroughly American nationalism, which was "neither militaristic nor expansionist," but based on a belief that America was superior to the Old World and therefore should be kept as separate from the Old World as possible. As John T. Flynn wrote,

> it is out of this abominable world of imperialism, the scramble for dominion, the fight for trade backed by armies and guns, that I want to keep this great peaceful democratic America of ours.

A natural companion to the desire to keep America as separate as possible from the Old World was protectionism, as Raimondo recognizes despite his own libertarian convictions. Raimondo quotes the protectionist views of his hero Garet Garrett, and Albert Jay Nock's accurate description of the Constitution (a document Nock deemed inferior to the Articles of Confederation) as envisioning a "nationwide free trade area walled in by a general tariff," and concedes that "There has always been a strain of protectionist sentiment among conservatives, and the Old Right was particularly prone to it."

The Old Right was eclipsed because of its views on foreign policy. Having opposed America's entry into World War II, Garrett and Flynn lost their jobs, and the *Chicago Tribune* was a target of the Roosevelt administration; FDR ultimately launched an unsuccessful prosecution of the *Tribune* under the Espionage Act. Despite the calumny to which they were subjected, much of what the Old Right said about the drive to war has been proved correct. We now know that FDR was indeed lying to the American people about what he intended to do, and that the British were running a hostile espionage campaign in America designed to suborn American politicians to do Britain's bidding and to defame Americans opposed to entering the war. Flynn prophetically warned that any peace treaty coming out of World War II "will have to satisfy Communist Russia," even as McCormick asked, immediately after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, "Should we enter the war to extend [Stalin's] rule over more of Europe, or having helped him win, should we then have to rescue the continent from him?"

The Old Right's continued opposition to foreign intervention meant that there was no room for it in the new conservative movement being created by Buckley, which placed support for the Cold War at the center of its agenda. However, the Old Right was staunchly anticommunist and supportive of Joe McCarthy. It saw McCarthy "as a battering ram against the Liberal Establishment" who also helped to turn "the main thrust of the people's suspicions inward, rather than outward." This was in marked contrast to the men who later became neoconservatives; Irving Kristol dismissed McCarthy as a "vulgar demagogue."

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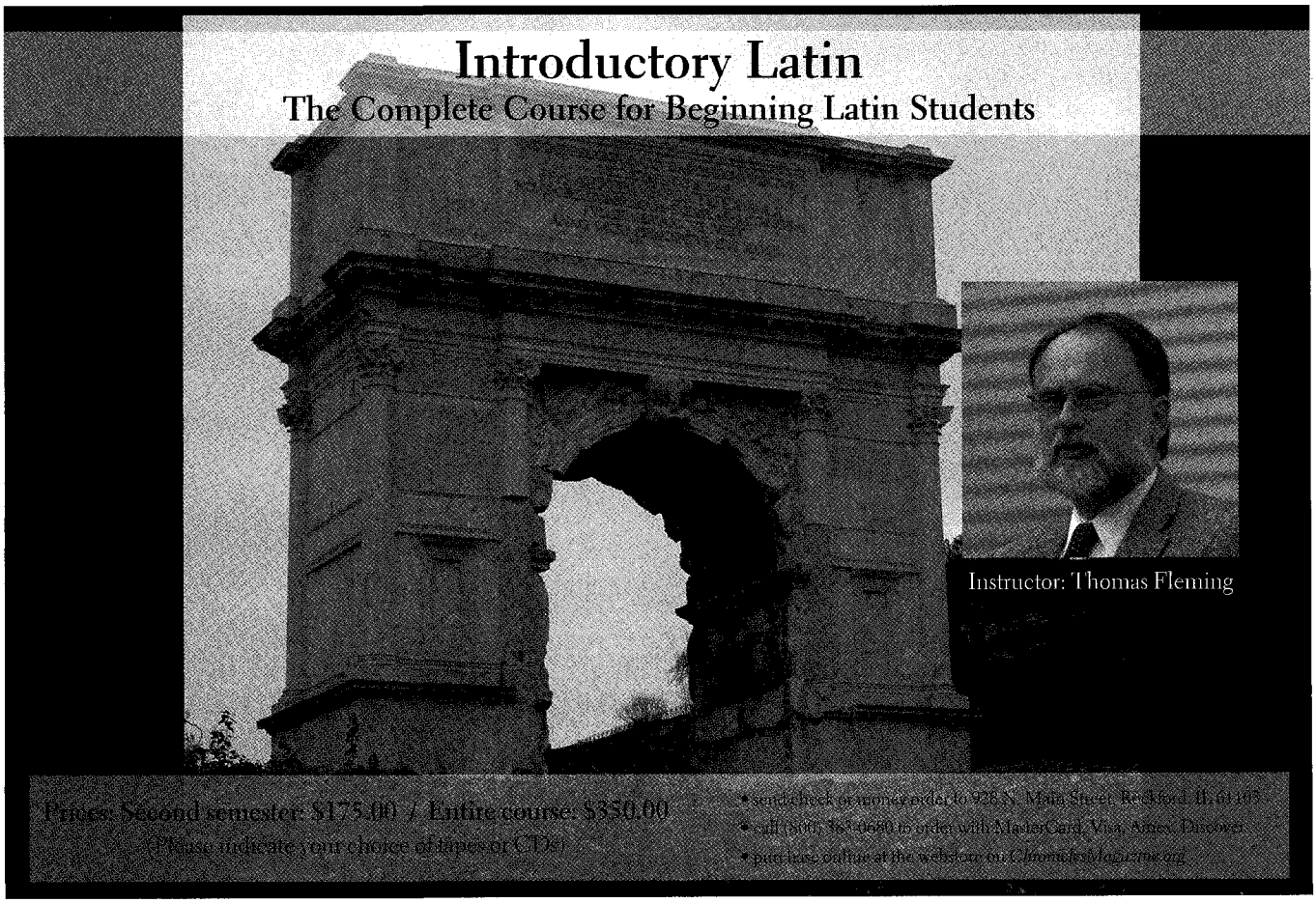
Among those who refused to denounce McCarthy was James Burnham, whom Raimondo incorrectly tags as the "first neoconservative." Burnham's support for McCarthy is only the first sign that Raimondo has misread him. After all, even today McCarthy is a target of neoconservative opprobrium, as shown most recently by Ronald Radosh's scathing attack in *National Review* on M. Stanton Evans' positive assessment of McCarthy, a book wisely and favorably reviewed in these pages by John Willson. As Scott Richert notes in his illuminating critical essay in Raimondo's book, Burnham also would not have supported the powerful presidency that the neocons have long sought; his *Congress and the American Tradition* is an able defense of the legislative branch that has been losing power to the executive since the New Deal. Nor is Raimondo's dismissal of *Suicide of the West* as a "standard anti-communist tract" persuasive. Burnham's most popular book is instead a profound critique of the liberalism Burnham brilliantly analyzed as "the ideology of Western suicide." That liberalism included many elements adopted by the neoconservatives, including globalism and an abstract, universalist understanding of human rights. And it must be remembered that Burnham's greatest exponent and exegete was the late Sam Francis, whom Raimondo favorably quotes regarding the strategy conservatives should pursue today:

> [A] new American Right must recognize that its values and goals lie outside and against the establishment and that its natural allies are not in Manhattan, New Haven, and Washington, but in the increasingly alienated and threatened strata of Middle America.

Raimondo recognized that the collapse of the Soviet Union represented an opportunity to reshape American conservatism, since many conservatives remembered that the Cold War was supposed to be "a temporary expedient, an extended but necessary diversion from the task of building a free society." Raimondo was perhaps too optimistic about how easy it would be to move American conservatism away from militarism. Sadly, it is no longer true that "There is no constituency on the Right for the New World Order. And as for 'exporting democracy,' enthusiasm for such a cause seems limited to those few who will directly benefit." Thanks to George W. Bush and the neoconservative co-optation of most conservative media outlets, many of today's Middle Americans now view "exporting democracy" as an integral part of our country's role in the world.

But reality cannot be ignored forever, and the Bush presidency in its final months witnessed the spectacular collapse of an economic policy based on unprecedented debt, and of a foreign policy based on a desire to control the planet. This spectacle should remind Americans of the enduring merits of the ideas advanced by the figures Raimondo so ably chronicles in this book.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Cosmopolitan Nation

by H.A. Scott Trask

What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848
by Daniel Walker Howe
New York: Oxford University Press; 904 pp., $35.00

The search for and, when it cannot be found, the construction of a usable past remains the overriding task of our official historians, who believe that we are forever on the cusp of a new age. The opposite could be said of Thucydides, who sought "an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the understanding of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble it." Daniel Walker Howe titles the Prologue to his grand synthesis of American history between the second English and first Mexican War "The Defeat of the Past." The idea that the past can be defeated, overcome, or transcended is an Enlightenment conceit that found receptive soil in North America; it has since grown into one of our most powerful and persistent myths.

For Howe, the past is but the prelude to the present; its persons and parties are neatly divided between those who are hastening its glorious and godlike consummation and those who persist in hindering it. In Howe's telling, history is emptied of all tragedy and contingency. He would deny the charge, but his tragedy consists in merely not doing sooner what eventually will be done, and contingency is a mere detour on the road to our providential destination. When he anoints the Whig Party of Henry Clay "the party of America's future" who "deserve to be remembered," what is he saying but that everyone else deserves to be forgotten?

Howe's volume is the latest addition to the Oxford history of the United States. Some readers may recall that Charles Sellers' *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (1991) was initially chosen for this historiographical niche. Its reduction in rank marks the ascendancy of race and sex over class in the trinity of oppression. We can say goodbye to the tribunitian view of Andrew Jackson argued for by Arthur Schlesinger and, most recently, by Sean Wilentz. Howe portrays Old Hickory as an authoritarian, a racist, and an imperialist.

Howe rejects the term *Jacksonian Democracy* as "inappropriate" because only white men could vote. He argues that the Jacksonians were essentially white supremacists and imperialists, dedicated to the perpetuation of African slavery and the "extension of white supremacy across the North American continent." Everything else they claimed to stand for was secondary to those ends, or merely instrumental. Readers familiar with the volume next in line, James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* (1989), will recognize in Howe a kindred spirit, aflame with zeal to trample out the grapes of wrath.

The back of the jacket includes praise for the book by one Prof. Kathryn Kish Sklar, who finds it "a compelling new interpretation of the historical foundations of modern America." Historical scholarship must be "new" in order to be published, as if historical research were like medicine or astrophysics rather than a liberal art. The truth is that no history of the American past is really "new." Howe's interpretation is novel only in relation to that which immediately preceded it. His perspective is that of an abolitionist and Radical Republican.

Historians are not supposed to take sides in past political conflicts, nor are they supposed to project the values and preoccupations of the present into the past, yet they all do it to one degree or another. Retrospective partisanship has the same effect on the mind as does partisanship in the present: It simplifies, blinds, and divides. By siding with the National Republicans against the Old Republicans, the Whigs against the Democrats, the North against the South, Howe creates an alternate history ("if only") in which the slaves might have been freed, the Indians groomed for citizenship, rapacity checked, violence put to an end, the economy planned and regulated—if only the enlightened nationalism of James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, and Henry Clay had prevailed over the racism and demagoguery of the Democrats. It all went wrong in 1829, when that devil Andrew Jackson rode into the White House.

It is easy for Howe to project onto the Whigs his various fantasies, for the Whigs never really exercised power during their brief 20-year existence. But we do have an idea of what they would have done. Starting in 1861, under a new name, they did exercise power, and we know what followed: a riot of privilege, a cornucopia of corruption, reckless expansion, financial panics, and violent class warfare. When Howe praises the Whig ideal of "a government acting in partnership with private enterprise to promote public prosperity and enlightenment," he betrays a shocking naiveté. Americans rebelled against that kind of system in the 1770's, then known as mercantilism: Adam Smith wrote his *Wealth of Nations* (1776) against it. The Jacksonians were economic liberals, as well as agrarians, but Howe portrays them as economic primitives, opposed to "modernization."

If there is one thing that is novel in this book, it is the author's praise of Christianity. (Academic historians generally have treated religion as a method of social control.) Howe believes that American Protestantism fostered literacy, popular education, scientific research, social reform, and the practice of democracy. He reveals much that will make an ACLU lawyer squirm: that Jefferson's famous "wall of separation" was a later judicial imposition; that "a strict separation of church and state . . . did not characterize the young republic"; that "Bible-reading in the common schools remained widespread"; and "that virtually everyone believed in intelligent design."

Nevertheless, he fails to understand religious developments of great significance. For instance, the Great Awak-

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ening represented a move away from traditional Protestantism. Luther and Calvin had both insisted on the necessity of a learned ministry and affirmed the creeds of the Church, and Calvin practiced systematic theology. The revivalists substituted the inspired amateur and radical subjectivism, and thus prepared the soil for the flourishing of heresy, including Mormonism.

"Historians still disagree about whether to classify Charles Grandison Finney [the leader of the revivals] as a Calvinist or an Arminian." Clearly Finney was no Calvinist, as his own writings, as well as those of his contemporary Charles Hodge, the great Princeton theologian, testified. Howe's failure to discover this plain fact reveals not only an excessive reliance upon secondary sources but points to the pseudoscientific fallacy that pervades "the profession" of history. When he writes "historians still disagree," he is saying that, since the science is not yet in (*i.e.*, historians have not yet reached a consensus), the question is still open, and thus he cannot render a judgment. Conversely, when professional historians come to an agreement on a matter, that means the question is closed.

Besides whether, or how far, to expand beyond the original boundaries of the United States, the fundamental political question before the country in the period embraced by Howe's study was whether to preserve the federated, constitutional republic and the sovereignty of the people or to substitute a unitary republic, in which the national government was effectively sovereign. This means nothing to Howe.

On his last day in office (March 3, 1817), James Madison vetoed the Bonus Bill, which would have created a permanent fund for internal improvements, on the grounds that the federal government had no constitutional authority to do such a thing. Howe considers the veto to have been a "mistake," and Madison's call for an amendment to delegate the power, "politically impractical." Why? "Amending the Constitution is a protracted and imponderable process." Howe agrees with the "broad constructionists who did not want to establish the precedent of having to amend the Constitution every time someone called a federal power into question." The precedent that they did not want to establish was that of abiding by the Constitution! Instead, they wanted the freedom to act, thus presenting the public with a *fait accompli*. The Supreme Court would then recognize the fact as an authoritative precedent conferring constitutionality (as it did with the national bank in *McCulloch* v. *Maryland*). Howe clearly agrees with this procedure, for he endorses Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion in that case. Thus, not only does Howe prefer political expediency over constitutionality, he prefers a different constitution, a constitution of precedents in which the amending power is effectively ceded to Congress, the president, and the courts.

Gov. DeWitt Clinton of New York, a man whom Howe wrongly identifies as an economic nationalist in favor of a broad construction of federal powers, warned against the exercise by the federal government of a power to fund internal improvements as a "harbinger of certain destruction to the State Governments." It "breaks down the barriers between a Government for national, or exterior affairs, and local Governments for domestic or internal concerns." "As well might Congress take cognizance of agriculture, common schools, universities, penal codes, and the whole range of local and internal regulations, as of roads and canals."

In *Barron* v. *Baltimore* (1833), Marshall, writing for a unanimous court, ruled that the Bill of Rights applies only to the federal government. This, of course, was the original understanding of those amendments, and Marshall's opinion was correct. Yet Howe complains that

> it would take the Fourteenth Amendment and much elaborate reasoning in the twentieth century for the Supreme Court to undo the consequences of Marshall's uncharacteristic decision in favor of state rights.

Howe professes to believe that "the historian's duty is to understand, not simply to condemn." Yet he never strays from the land of "historical self-righteousness" mapped out by Wendell Berry: "If we had lived south of the Ohio, we would not have owned slaves; if we had lived on the frontier, we would have killed no Indians, violated no treaties, stolen no land." Nor does he ever cease trying to justify the way things are now by rewriting the past.

Herbert Arthur Scott Trask is an historian who lives and writes in the Missouri River hill country west of St. Louis.

Caesar on His Own

by Matthew A. Roberts

Caesar: Life of a Colossus
by Adrian Goldsworthy
New Haven: Yale University Press;
608 pp., $18.00

"The Republic is nothing, a mere name without form or substance," Julius Caesar allegedly stated. The sentiment, certainly, was validated by the end of Caesar's life, which marked the transition from an imperial republic to an empire eclipsing republican institutions. So bloody and tumultuous was this period, it is unsurprising that estimations of Caesar vary.

While Shakespeare portrayed Caesar as pompously benign, George Washington and his contemporaries, inspired by Joseph Addison's play *Cato: A Tragedy*, considered Caesar a tyrant, a view that would have been shared by Caesar's aristocratic peers. Among scholars, assessments also diverge. The 19th-century German classicist Theodor Mommsen regarded Caesar as a gifted statesman and liberal reformer of a corrupt aristocracy; Oxford don Sir Ronald Syme deemed him not a reformer with purpose but a shrewd competitor vying for power among elite factions. To this day, oth-

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er interpretations abound.

The most recent addition is *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, by the British military historian Adrian Goldsworthy, author of *The Roman Army at War*. Goldsworthy weaves together information from various ancient sources into a well-written and lively biography, the aim of which is "to examine Caesar's life on its own terms, and to place it firmly within the context of Roman society in the first century BC." While modern histories often appraise the works of other academics and debate historical methods, Goldsworthy relegates such discussion to a mere 35 pages of endnotes and bibliography. Surprisingly, the book lacks an in-depth discussion of Sir Ronald Syme or Christian Meier, whose works provide substantial counterarguments to Goldsworthy's own view of Caesar. Writing a popular history and presenting a broad overview of Caesar's life, he maintains Caesar was "a fugitive, prisoner, rising politician, army leader, legal advocate, rebel, dictator—perhaps even a god—as well as a husband, father, lover and adulterer."

In many ways, young Caesar was no different from his aristocratic peers. Dismissing the importance of partisan machinations stressed by earlier historians, Goldsworthy highlights that competing in the arena of Roman politics was not just a "question of winning popular acclaim, but of winning more than anyone else." Although Caesar may have championed the causes of the *populares*, it was for personal gain. To that end, Caesar took great risks (*e.g.*, taking on massive loans to promote himself).

Applying his knowledge of Roman military history, Goldsworthy provides a chronicle of Caesar's campaigns in Gaul (58-50 B.C.). Some scholars have questioned the veracity of Caesar's *Commentaries on the Gallic War* (on which Goldsworthy relies heavily), but the author counters that they were written to influence public opinion, and that Caesar could not have risked blatant invention, which his readers would have spotted. Although Caesar might have been prone to exaggeration (in regard to casualties, sizes of armies, or the differences between Gauls and Germans, for example), the *Commentaries* provide a factual narrative that would have entertained Caesar's audience, especially those with ties to the ordinary soldiers of the legions. (The senatorial and equestrian officers play only a minor role in these pages.)

While modern readers envision legions of Italian soldiers, Goldsworthy reveals the changing demographics of the Roman army. Under Gaius Marius, Caesar's uncle, the ranks had already been opened to non-Italians, and Caesar continued to apply this liberal recruitment policy to admit many *auxilia*: foreign warriors such as Cretan and Numidian archers, Galatian and German soldiers, Gallic cavalry and staff, slingers from the Balearic Islands, and Spanish cavalry. Caesar also raised new legions of Gauls, including the Fifth Alaudae. Although most of the soldiers lacked citizenship, Caesar treated them as if they were citizens, and within a century of his death descendants of these soldiers took their place in Rome's senate.

The Roman civil war was fought, Goldsworthy argues, not "over great issues or between conflicting ideologies, but was about personal position and dignitas—most of all that of Caesar." Caesar believed he had contributed greatly to the welfare of the republic, and that the senate was attempting prematurely to curtail his command. On the other hand, men from established families "were raised to believe that they deserved to guide the Republic, but Caesar's eminence robbed them of much of this role." Most aristocrats joined the side of Pompey, while men whom Cicero and others saw "as people who had squandered their own inheritance and now expected to govern the Republic" joined Caesar. The war was not inevitable—there were many attempts at compromise—but in the end no settlement was proposed that both Caesar and Pompey would accept. Neither man was willing to back down.

After Caesar's victory, he offered clemency to most of the surviving Pompeians (a practice Mark Antony and Octavian did not later imitate). This clemency, Goldsworthy notes, was extended for a practical purpose: By demonstrating that he was no Sulla, Caesar hoped to increase his popularity. But he acceded only so far to popular pleas. Although there were many cries for the abolition of debt, for *novae tabulae* (new tablets), Caesar refused such drastic measures and sought compromise. Still, throughout his life, Caesar championed numerous popular reforms—army reorganization, clemency, expanded citizenship, free grain, land resettlement—again, though, for reasons of personal consideration. Caesar could also be ruthless when it suited his purposes, as his mass executions of rebel Gauls demonstrate. He wanted power and respect, and he employed the necessary means to achieve them.

His assassins, although many had supported him in the civil war, thought it inappropriate for one man to wield so much power and preferred to pursue their careers in a republic from which their rival had been removed. What Caesar intended for the long term—a monarchy or a modified republic—is uncertain. Perhaps he really had no vision at all.

Matthew A. Roberts writes from Parkville, Missouri.

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by Philip Jenkins

Yes We Can!

The word *transformational* surfaced often in the 2008 election season, and for once, the cliché might have had some validity. America assuredly is entering an era of transformation, even of revolutionary change, but on nothing like the lines that many expect. The political right stands to benefit enormously, provided its adherents understand the dramatically altered ground rules. Yes we can!

That comment may sound strange following an election that epitomized the internal collapse of a nation—political, economic, and, above all, cultural. The left wanted a new New Deal, and they will likely get just that, in an ugly reprise of the FDR years. Under the leadership of a cynical demagogue, Washington will restructure the economy to penalize economic creativity and eliminate demand, institutionalizing poverty. As a direct consequence of this election, this country will face one of the worst periods in her history. The coming decade will be characterized by economic depression, mass poverty, political gangsterism, labor racketeering, sweeping censorship, and rampaging official corruption, with a strong prospect of mass violence. Unlike the 1930's, moreover, this lovely era offers no prospect of escape through foreign adventure, as any war sufficiently large to galvanize the economy would also be so destructive as to end the functioning of the wider society. There would be no way out. November 2008 was in effect a vote for national suicide.

That is the bad news, and it is indeed very bad. Yet the good news is also there for those who care to look. Look first at the number of people who voted against Obama, even after a deeply unpopular presidency and during a crippling economic crisis: 46 percent still voted for McCain. In 1932, by contrast, Herbert Hoover couldn't even scrape together 40 percent. Add to that solid base the others who voted for Obama, naively and tentatively—even, God knows, in the hope of eliminating "partisanship"—but who are in no sense wedded to radical socialist schemes.

Then, remember three inevitable features of the incoming regime. First, know that it will act as if it had an overwhelming mandate for revolutionary change, to build the Ecotopian People's Republic in America's Green and Pleasant Land. They will govern as if they had a landslide, and that will be their destruction.

Second, and even better for the regime's enemies, Democrats in power will interpret any opposition or criticism as sinister or pernicious, and therefore unworthy of the slightest accommodation or compromise. You're dubious about any aspect of our policy? You must be a racist! That was exactly how liberals saw the world under Jimmy Carter, and they paid a catastrophic price over the next quarter-century.

Finally, once they do decide to govern without any thought of compromise—and they will—Democrats face a wondrous range of explosive issues with the potential to generate mass opposition. As in earlier eras, liberals will rule as if all issues are really matters of economics, race, and class injustice. They will be painfully blind to every other social or cultural theme that has the proven potential to arouse mass conservative resistance, even among those who voted their way in 2008.

Obvious detonator issues will include national security and the castration of the military, together with the forfeiture of national sovereignty under the guise of environmental protection. The popularity of environmentalism will plummet once the marching morons who supported Obama place a dollar figure on what they personally will have to contribute toward saving the earth.

Inevitably, too, sexual themes will dominate national debate once more. Just to take one example, once we see the idea of "gay marriage" extended to all states, someone will ask, finally, just what the proper age of consent is for such unions. Sixteen? Fourteen? At that point, expect real mass concern about the directions of social progress.

As opposition burgeons, antiregime forces should follow certain guiding principles. The first involves cooperation or conciliation with the Obama administration, an idea that will be pressed hard under the siren call of bipartisanship. The right should repudiate any collaboration. They should treat President Obama with exactly the same degree of respect, decency, and patriotic consideration for national unity that liberals have offered to President Bush since 2001—namely, zero.

Also, they should be very careful before accepting the regime's portrayals of its enemies, as the most damning comments will be reserved for those who resist most forcefully and effectively. Over the next four years, Democrats will command a united, tame media, which will exercise no restraint in denouncing enemies with every obnoxious label available to their limited vocabularies. Until the media loathe you and stigmatize you as enemies of peace, justice, and humanity, you aren't doing your job.

In short, welcome to the White House, Mr. Obama. Good luck completing your term.

Let the games begin. ©

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by Scott P. Richert

Detroit City

Home folks think I'm big in
Detroit City
From the letters that I write
they think I'm fine
But by day I make the cars
By night I make the bars
If only they could read
between the lines . . .

For decades, Detroit has been America's whipping boy. It's not as if the Big Three automakers haven't given us plenty of reasons to dislike them. Few people who ever drove a Chrysler K-car are likely to rank that experience among their happiest. In the mid-70's, driven in large part by the rise of computer-aided design and government-mandated increases in fuel economy, industry executives drew what seemed a rational line between engineering and actual production. The result was products that worked well on paper, but not on pavement. (One of the things that helped make Saturn successful was a return to a better relationship between engineering and production.)

The industry has been notoriously slow to react to increases in gas prices, but those who fault the Big Three for building "boats" in the 70's and GM and Ford for concentrating on trucks and SUVs over the past decade seem never to notice that the companies were responding to demand. In fact, if the Big Three had made their decisions in the opening years of the 21st century entirely on the basis of demand, they would have decreased production of small and mid-sized cars dramatically. Instead, they offered massive incentives—rebates, low- and no-interest loans, 60- and 72-month financing—to keep demand for these models up.

Of course, if they hadn't, Congress would not be debating a plan to offer up to $50 billion in loan guarantees to the Big Three. And when gasoline hit four dollars per gallon and truck and SUV sales plummeted by 30-plus percent, GM and Ford would not have been positioned to switch production over to the smaller, more fuel-efficient models to help cushion the blow. Rather than just closing the Janesville, Wisconsin, plant (which manufactured SUVs and light trucks), GM might already have shut its doors for good.

Here in Rockford, there are other reasons to dislike the Big Three. Like most large, publicly traded multinational corporations based in the United States, the Big Three not only supported but lobbied for NAFTA and permanent most-favored-nation status for China. Both allowed the auto companies to increase profits by outsourcing the manufacturing of parts, at the expense of small manufacturers in the Midwest who had previously supplied the Big Three. The result has been the gutting of American manufacturing, which dropped in 2008 to below ten percent of the U.S. economy.

Rather than beginning a process of restructuring and reinvestment, Ford and GM have continued to pay dividends and to focus on propping up stock prices. Like too many publicly traded companies, their "long view" has been restricted to the next 90 days—one year, at the outside.

Had they given more thought to the future, had they been more concerned about the small manufacturers who acted as their supply chain for the better part of the last century, the Big Three could have flexed their muscle in Washington to replace declining tariffs with a border-adjusted value-added tax, as every other industrialized country has over the past 35 years. A VAT would have helped level the playing field for all American manufacturing and could have been used to reduce corporate income taxes, one of the greatest disadvantages that the Big Three have in competing against Asian and European automakers.

Some of the Big Three's failure to act can be attributed to the typical shortsightedness of our economic elite; much of it can be attributed to greed and the desire for big profits today, rather than continued profits over the long haul.

So why should Congress even consider extending loan guarantees to the Big Three? Put simply, the alternative is likely to be much worse. And here, I'm not talking primarily about the economic effects—as many as three million jobs lost, once the ripples have played out; $150 billion in lost tax revenue; $30 billion or more in pension guarantees that taxpayers would have to cover through the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. I'm speaking of the social costs—the near-complete destruction of Michigan and Ohio, and the reduction of Wisconsin and possibly Illinois to the current conditions of Michigan and Ohio.

Bobby Bare's autoworker "dreamed about the cotton fields and home." In the end, he left Detroit City behind and returned to his family. But those who are already being displaced in Michigan and Ohio have no home elsewhere to return to. This is where their families have lived and died for generations.

If the Big Three go under, the United States may see the biggest internal migration of the white working class since the days of the Dust Bowl. That is, unless President Obama helps them to stay where they are by offering a New New Deal that will make FDR look like a piker—and, in the process, weds them for the next several generations to the Democratic Party.

In either case, $50 billion in loan guarantees might well be the less expensive option. ◁

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Letter From Australia

by R.J. Stove

Love It or Leave It?

As ululating headline after ululating headline blares forth Wall Street's apocalypse; as Obamamaniacs promise race riots to break whitey's collective spirit once and for all; as concepts like Peak Oil move from the fringes to the mainstream of media discourse; as America is forced to apprehend, in Fay Weldon's droll aphorism, that "the *fin* has come early this *siècle*"—a line from Chesterton's short story "The Arrow of Heaven" takes on ever-greater significance for us outside Americophiles. That line is this: "He [Father Brown] realized that he was among foreigners, even if he was among friends."

Never has America appeared more incomprehensible in other lands than she has in the last month. We who are routinely published in America, who read for preference American books and magazines, who live and sleep and breathe and indeed dream America, who above all treasure our American friendships, are as baffled by what to expect as if we were contemplating Nagorno-Karabakh. All we can predict is that the mass culture will increasingly bear the same relation to a genuine culture that the Soviet-era Lake Baikal bore to a viable ecosystem. Now that this long-operating development has been quickened and sharpened by economic crisis of the most visible kind, we find ourselves wondering: For American paleoconservatives, has American residence now passed the point of tolerability? Will entire intellectual classes, rather than mere ornery individuals, start emigrating?

Some years ago Joseph Sobran decided, with characteristic *élan* and verve, that he would give President Bush's empire the two-fingered salute by moving to Haiti. After all, as he argued, illegal immigration is not a problem that Haitian regimes have ever had to cope with before, and there is no reason to suppose that they have acquired any efficiency at suppressing it now. His plan for an expatriate city upon a hill at Port-au-Prince seems to have been frustrated by events; but others will take the notions of international (instead of merely intra-urban) white flight very seriously.

We all—American and non-American readers alike—have become so accustomed to the chauvinistic honking of David Frum and his wretched kind as to have forgotten a straightforward historical truth: There have been times when exile has seemed like the natural condition of *Homo americanus*' authorial contingent. For proof of the truth, we need not even look at Melville's Polynesian preoccupations, or the Mediterranean obsessions of Hawthorne and Margaret Fuller. Simply imagine literature between the wars without its American exiles: Hemingway, Eliot, Pound, Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Kay Boyle, and the rest. It just cannot be done. We saw a similar, though much smaller, self-imposed American migration during the Vietnam War, afflicting such artists as Robert Lowell, useless to any draft board by virtue of age. There is no reason why a similar trend could not happen afresh, especially when intercontinental travel is easier to arrange *via* the internet (and no more expensive) than it has ever been.

Among traditional Catholic online discussion groups—the same thing could well be true of online discussion groups for traditional Lutherans and Orthodox—the question of where the remnant should emigrate, to escape a totally rather than merely nominally post-Christian America, has become a topic of almost feverish, and uniformly dyslexic, discussion. Malta and Poland recur as possibilities. A few benighted souls imagine that they might find a welcoming home in Australia, being presumably unaware that on the present (or any future) Australian government's immigration wish list, white skilled Trinitarian English-speakers rank well below the tempest-tossed products of teeming Third World shores. New Zealand is a marginally more plausible refuge, her devotion to proportional parliamentary representation having had the unintended consequence of giving legislative power to individuals with sane immigration policies. Even now, the demographic difference between New Zealand and eastern Australia resembles the demographic difference between Hartford and South Central Los Angeles.

The old hard-hat slogan ran: "America: Love it or leave it." Burke adopted a more intelligent credo: "For us to love our country, our country ought to be lovely." If not lovely, then at least bearable. What happens when a country has ceased to be bearable, so that no further accommodations with the *Zeitgeist* can be made, no further rationalizations exhibited, without destroying precisely that cognitive power which made the intellectual an intellectual in the first place? We foreigners should not presume to tell Americans where their tipping point is. Yet Americans themselves should. Perhaps *Chronicles* could contemplate organizing a symposium on the subject of whether expatriation should be deprecated, ignored, or roundly encouraged. A working title could be adapted from *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "Silence, Exile, or Cunning?"

R.J. Stove is the author of A Student's Guide to Music History. *He writes from Melbourne, Australia.*

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Letter From Burma

by Harry Nicolaides

Checkpoint Child Porn

In a small, dimly lit room at the Burmese immigration office, on the border of northern Thailand and Burma, there is a large, luminous portrait of Gen. Than Shwe, festooned with medals and ribbons.

His steely gaze surveys the hundreds of foreign tourists who cross the Thai-Burma border bridge to visit the ramshackle, open-air market at Tachilek each day. He is also the embodiment of strict and relentless censorship, from poetry to the latest Rambo film (set in Burma)—everything controlled by his Orwellian regime.

However, less than 50 meters away, under the bridge on the Burmese side—and for a little over a dollar—you can buy films depicting the sexual abuse and torture of British, American, European, and Asian children. Some are aged as young as four, while none is older than twelve.

And unless you are a saffron-robed monk, you will not be searched on the way back across the border into Thailand.

While the market at Tachilek is notorious for fake designer goods, dubious precious gemstones, the teeth, skulls, and skins of endangered animals, and phony, placebo-inducing pharmaceuticals, the child pornography is real.

The chilling tears and shrieks are not the result of dubbing or digital manipulation.

The graphic footage of a five-year-old Cambodian girl having her arms strapped to her legs with electrical tape before being subjected to unspeakable violations is unrehearsed.

The diminutive seven-year-old British girl who is raped by a 200-pound, black-hooded man while another man films has been deceived by someone she trusts.

The Indian girl, aged about six, wearing only school socks and shoes, has not been groomed to look like a primary-school student: She is a primary-school student. And she is violently raped.

Unlike the ubiquitous image of Saddam Hussein on playing cards and cigarette lighters, peddled by the hundreds of panhandlers who whisper conspiratorially to tourists about sex with children, no two girls or scenes of abuse in dozens of different films and hours of footage are the same. And while the fake designer goods are mass produced for a large, diverse market, the record of abuse of these young girls is sold exclusively to a dedicated, hardcore group of connoisseurs by the world's most malevolent cottage industry.

The Tachilek market and the bridge crossing at Mai Sai, where naked children swim in the muddy waters below, are well known to international human-rights groups, NGOs, and law-enforcement bodies as strategically important to regional human trafficking and narcotics smuggling.

On the Burmese mountains and in the dark ravines, there are dozens of makeshift camps where ethnic minorities, uprooted, persecuted, and displaced by Burma's military regime, seek refuge. Many of them make their way to Thailand to find work.

On the Thai side, in the lowlands of rice and corn fields, are hundreds of crumbling orphanages where thousands of children are sent to become another name on a large rickety chalkboard that, as one aid worker said, does not reflect the real number of transient children in care. And while Thailand has set up roadside checkpoints on the highway between Chiang Rai and Mai Sai, in reality they consist of life-sized, fiberglass figures of Thai police officers in their regulation white motorcycle helmet, sunglasses, and brown uniform, signaling to drivers to stop.

Sadly, unlike the fake designer goods at the Tachilek market, the Thai police dummies lack verisimilitude.

Burma is a party to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) but has not yet signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000). States that are parties to the convention and optional protocol are, in addition to protecting children from all forms of abuse and exploitation, obliged to take appropriate measures to thwart the production and distribution of child pornography.

Burma's own child laws state that it is a punishable offense to use children in the making of pornographic material, while its penal code makes it illegal to exhibit or distribute any obscene material. The penalties range from fines to terms of imprisonment of up to two years. However, with Burma's state infrastructure and law-enforcement bodies riddled with corruption, it's no surprise the Tachilek market is honeycombed with illegal goods.

Behind legitimate shop fronts are secret doors and false walls leading to hidden inner rooms where thousands of films depicting the most depraved, unspeakable social taboos are displayed and sold.

The abhorrent trade in child pornography flourishes while the omniscient Burmese regime scrutinizes the plots of the latest Hollywood films for conspiracies and subversion against the state—when the greatest subterfuge is within.

There are no borders or checkpoints *en route* to the heart of darkness.

Harry Nicolaides is a freelance Australian journalist who recently visited Burma.

Harry Nicolaides

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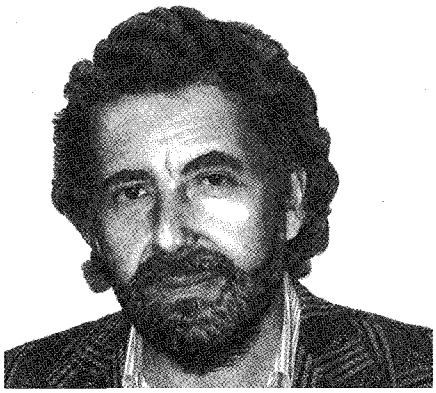
by Andrei Navrozov

Thin End of the Wedge



A shopkeeper in the Vucciria market in Palermo offers me a taste of local *peccorino* cheese on the tip of something that looks like a machete. It is a classic Proustian moment. The inner mouse accepts, nibbles at the wedge with a thoughtful face, and goes for three quarters of a kilo. Is there a conservative animal amongst us—I wonder as I stumble out with the greasy parcel under my arm into the dusty Sicilian springtime—who has not bought into a vice, a culture, or a way of life upon accepting a precariously balanced sample?

I recalled Lampedusa's Prince, hurrying to his assignation with a mistress, whom he cynically describes as the family pet in a silk petticoat, through this part of town.

> It was a short walk, but through a quarter of ill repute. . . . Sinister-looking youths in wide trousers were quarrelling in the guttural grunts Sicilians use in anger. In the distance echoed shots from nervous sentries. Once past this district his route skirted the Cala. In the old fishing port decaying boats bobbed up and down, desolate as mangy dogs.

Afterward, as he makes his way home, the Prince is "immersed in sated ease tinged with disgust."

Years ago, when I had become conversant with the underworld of prostitution in London, I often saw the same incremental suborning of reason used to great effect, though as usual it took the mouse rather a long while to catch on and make the connection. Ask any madam, and in a moment of delicious frankness she will confirm that whatever the punter may have ordered—her client's often detailed and rarely original description of the ideal woman whom he would like the procuress to deliver to him—is to be ignored, completely and without the slightest concession to common sense.

This may not be the first rule of the business, but it is its heart and soul, since the client himself knows at some level that, whether he ends up paying the street price or ten times the amount, he's only going to get what he's going to get. A procuress would not be so naive as to claim, even in private, that she will dispatch whoever's available at the moment because the client cannot tell tall-and-blonde from slim-and-buxom. But both know that when the package arrives he will sign for it irrespective of what it contains.

The madam knows from long experience that the client only thinks he wants a lingerie-model type, French-speaking and with blue eyes, but not too tall, who finishes all her vegetables. He is really after insubstantial figments of the imagination—entertainment, novelty, spectacle. The unexpected, the unpredictable. "Feminine." Hence much of the satisfaction of the caprice lies in the act of consignment, though of course if, in the end, sir isn't satisfied it's only better for the madam's business, because the happily frustrated dreamer is sure to try his luck again the following night. On the other hand, had the madam been sympathetic enough to hear him out and to deposit the actual woman of his dreams on his doorstep, in all probability she would lose both a valued employee and a valuable client, while sir would gain an avaricious and stupid mistress.

The tacit compact between pander and gull, astute on one side and subliminal on the other, has an analogue in pornography. Here, too, the excitement is in the delivery of a harem novelty into the hands of the putative potentate. Mmm, I like her glass slipper, murmurs to himself the prince of Always Reliable Moving & Storage, aware at some level of his consciousness that she and her glass slipper exist only in the fairy-tale business, and that it runs just as much against its commercial principles to introduce the woman behind the image into his reliable world as it would for the brothel to take on the functions of a matrimonial agency.

Then again, in our commercial society, analogues of this kind are plentiful. It is a truism, long belabored by hands as diverse as Weber, Veblen, and Marcuse, that the promotion of never-to-be-satisfied desire is what mature capitalism is all about, and such mirages of mobility or sociability as were conjured up by Ford Motor Company in the 1920's, or more recently by the pyramid scheme of the World Wide Web, owe much to the psychological mechanisms perfected by man in the pursuit of the eternal feminine. Hence it is hardly surprising that, buoyed by commercial successes in which the history of progress abounds, capitalism has raised the mutual compact of pander and gull to the eminence of an unwritten constitution.

When philosophers called Idealist first described the world as man's conception of it, they did not suppose that one day capitalism would harness their eccentric idea and start selling reality, at carefully inflated retail prices, back to those who have created it in their minds. Yet this is what's happened. The free sample—of happiness in the pursuit, of womanhood in the brothel, of cheese in the Vucciria market—is the thin end of the wedge known as the imagination, whose Proustian workings, like so many menacing cogs of a factory conveyor, catch hold of us individually and collectively.

This is why reason is the greatest enemy of business, just as sentiment is its lifelong friend. ◁

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by Srdja Trifkovic

The Clintons Are Back

Hillary Clinton's appointment as the third woman U.S. secretary of state is likely to deepen the crisis of the once-venerable institution at Washington's Foggy Bottom, to which her two female predecessors have contributed in different ways.

Madeleine Albright will be remembered for her hubris, coupled with studied callousness. ("If we have to use force, it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future.") Asked on *60 Minutes* about the death of a half-million Iraqi children, she promptly responded, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it." Her crowning glory was her premeditated 1999 war in the Balkans. ("The Serbs need a little bombing.") Her State Department contributed to Bill Clinton's doctrine of "humanitarian intervention."

Condoleezza Rice, who is less evil and more obtuse, will be remembered for nothing. She was an auxiliary tool of the Bush-Cheney team, with all key decisions made elsewhere.

Mrs. Clinton will try to rebuild the relative importance of the department, but her labors will not be for the better. Her appointment to the Obama administration, the most significant among several major figures from the Clinton era, belies Obama's rhetoric of "change" when it comes to foreign affairs. There will be tectonic shifts, cultural and moral, at home. The established premises of an imperial presidency—which in world affairs inevitably translates into a justification for global interventionism—will not change.

Once it is accepted that Obama's primary interest lies in an irreversible redistribution of power and money at home, it ceases to be surprising that he chose Hillary Clinton as his chief diplomat. Allowing her to indulge in some global grandstanding is acceptable to him, if that means the Clintons will not stand in the way of his domestic agenda. That Mrs. Clinton is instinctively opposed to any traditional understanding of diplomacy became obvious during the primary campaign, when she accused Obama of "naiveté" for saying he was willing to sit down with the leaders of Iran, Syria, and North Korea.

With Robert Gates staying at the Pentagon and Jim Jones as Obama's national security advisor, there will be a lot of continuity in U.S. foreign policy, not only with the 1990's but with recent years. In Mrs. Clinton's case there will be more lies, the hallmark of the family. During the primaries she listed a number of foreign-policy accomplishments based on her husband's legacy. She claimed that in Macedonia she "negotiated open borders" to Albanian refugees from Kosovo, although the crossings were opened days before her arrival in May 1999. She repeatedly invoked her "dangerous" trip to Bosnia in 1996, although the Bosnian war had ended six months earlier and video footage shows smiling schoolchildren greeting her in Tuzla.

In the same spirit Senator Clinton declared, in late 2002,

> Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile-delivery capability and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort and sanctuary to terrorists, including al-Qaida members. I want to insure that Saddam Hussein makes no mistake about our national unity and for our support for the president's efforts to wage America's war against terrorists and weapons of mass destruction.

Hillary Clinton says that she has had second thoughts since that time, and a year ago she declared in *Foreign Affairs* that "US troops should be brought home." During the primary campaign, however, she was markedly less willing than Obama to commit to a withdrawal timetable. The woman who voted to authorize the Iraq war, and who parroted the lies used to justify it, cannot be expected to clean up the mess created by that war. It is more likely that she will advocate a downsized and effectively open-ended U.S. occupation of Iraq.

In Afghanistan, Mrs. Clinton will seek greater troop deployments and an escalation of military activity. Last April, she sounded like John McCain: "I want the Iranians to know that if I'm the president, we will attack Iran" (if Iran attacks Israel). "In the next 10 years, during which they might foolishly consider launching an attack on Israel, we would be able to totally [*sic*] obliterate them." She will negotiate with the mullahs, however, if Tehran's tacit support is considered necessary for the achievement of her major ambition: a breakthrough in the Middle East.

Bill Clinton came closer than any other U.S. president to brokering an Arab-Israeli peace, and insiders say that Hillary will place this issue at the top of her agenda. She is a favorite of the pro-Israel lobby, however, and it is unclear what she can offer, or do, in 2009-10 that was not offered or tried at Camp David a decade earlier. A Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank in return for a recognition of Israel's right to exist, security guarantees, and diplomatic recognition is distinctly *déjà vu*. She will need to present a fresh formula, but to make it viable

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she will have to start by rephrasing her stated support for an "undivided" Jerusalem.

The misnamed "War on Terror" is the weakest spot in Barack Obama's global agenda, and Hillary Clinton will do nothing to rectify the problem. Alone among leading contenders of either party, she has no section on her website devoted to fighting terrorism and had very little to say on it during the campaign. "We know we need global coalitions to tackle global problems like climate change, poverty, AIDS, and terrorism," she declared, hinting at her priorities. To confuse a natural phenomenon, a human condition, and a lifestyle-inflicted disease with the most tangible real and present threat to Western civilization would be remarkable in any prominent public figure. In view of Mrs. Clinton's appointment it is alarming.

That she does not understand the phenomenon of *jihad* was evident during her U.S. Senate campaign; on at least two occasions she hosted receptions organized by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), a group that has promoted the activities of Hamas, Turkey's fundamentalist Welfare Party, and the Muslim Brotherhood. Mrs. Clinton had to return $50,000 received from MPAC (a sizable voting bloc in New York was at risk!), but she justified her contacts by claiming she was trying "to promote a framework for peace" that included "lines of communication to many different groups and many different individuals."

Her "framework for peace" in the Balkans is the same as her husband's: unqualified support for Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo against their Christian neighbors. In *Hillary's Choice*, Gail Sheehy recalls that Hillary pressed Bill to start the Kosovo war in 1999. When he expressed concern that bombing could have undesirable effects, including the prospect of rising civilian casualties, Hillary persisted: "I urged him to bomb. You cannot let this go on at the end of a century that has seen the major holocaust of our time. What do we have NATO for if not to defend our way of life?" To this day she sees the U.S.-led NATO aggression against Serbia as a good war. In her Senate speech before the vote on the Iraq war, she pointed approvingly to her husband's decision and drew parallels to the Bush administration's rationale for removing Saddam from power.

Hillary Clinton appears to be less Russophobic than some of Obama's advisors, notably Zbigniew and Mark Brzezinski. She has criticized the Bush administration's "obsessive" focus on "expensive and unproven missile defense technology," the deployment of which in Poland and the Czech Republic is a key point of contention between Washington and Moscow. She favors a further reduction in both sides' nuclear arsenals and supports U.S. Senate approval of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. On the key issue of NATO enlargement, however, both she and Obama will continue the Bush administration's flawed policy of seeking membership for Ukraine and Georgia.

That Obama's foreign policy may follow the neoliberal-hawkish Democratic tradition became apparent with the selection of Sen. Joe Biden as his running mate and the appointment, soon after the election, of Rep. Rahm Emanuel as his chief of staff. Both were enthusiastic supporters of the war against Yugoslavia in 1999.

The Clintons' disregard for old international norms and mechanisms for the protection of national liberties was as revolutionary on the global scene as Obama's presidency will be domestically. In that sense Hillary Clinton's appointment may reflect Obama's understanding that they are partners in a project to transform reality to fit their ideological preferences. At a less lofty level this decision may prove to be Obama's first major blunder. It is difficult to imagine anyone keeping the Clintons under control for an extended period of time. Obama has made himself hostage not only to Hillary's inevitable games and whims but to the future conduct of her husband.

Bill Clinton made his comeback in September 2005, when he assembled 800 prime ministers, kings, and other worthies to launch the Clinton Global Initiative to address "poverty, global warming, religious conflict and better governance." There are 208,000 donors to the William J. Clinton Foundation, which covers the Global Initiative as well as his presidential library. The list includes such controversial associates as Frank Giustra, the Canadian billionaire who went with Bill Clinton to Kazakhstan and subsequently obtained a $425 million mining contract there. Even as his wife was negotiating the Cabinet deal with Obama in late November, Clinton was in Kuwait giving a half-million-dollar speech on the global financial crisis, compliments of the host country's national bank.

Hillary's ambition is another ticking time bomb. She is smiling now, but she detests the man who stole the nomination she regarded as rightfully hers. There will never be a relationship of trust and confidence between them.

"Two of the nation's greatest secretaries of state in the modern period, Dean Acheson and Henry Kissinger, were not personally close but were intellectually bonded to their presidents," notes Walter Isaacson, coauthor of *The Wise Men*, a book about America's postwar foreign-policy establishment. The comparison is not apt. Neither Acheson nor Kissinger were presidential hopefuls. Hillary Clinton, by contrast, sees herself as destined to be the first woman president. If the attainment of that goal demands undermining the first black president, she will do it.

With Obama in the Oval Office and Hillary Clinton at State, America is less likely than ever to rediscover a world in which she will be secure and free, and will not threaten the security and freedom of others. This government is incapable of pursuing foreign-policy strategies founded on the notion of America as a real nation, because the chief executive wants to turn her into a very different nation. ◈

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Pakistan: America's Pandora's Box?

by Joseph E. Fallon

On September 10, 2008, the *New York Times* reported that, back in July, President Bush had authorized ground incursions and missile attacks to destroy Taliban and Al Qaeda sanctuaries in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. As the *Times* noted, "It is unclear precisely what legal authorities the United States has invoked to conduct even limited ground raids in a friendly country."

After the first ground assault on September 3, which lasted several hours and involved two-dozen Navy Seals, the unanimous reaction of Pakistan's democratically elected parliament was to call on its government to repel future U.S. incursions with military force. Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, agreed, declaring that his country's territorial integrity "will be defended at all costs."

Seeking to justify future incursions into Pakistan, President Bush announced on September 9 that Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan were "all theaters in the same overall struggle." But when the U.S. military attempted another ground attack on September 15, employing armed helicopters, it was forced to retreat after coming under sustained fire from Pakistan's army. The next day, Pakistan's military issued a press release announcing its policy on U.S. incursions: "The orders are clear . . . open fire."

If war with a nonnuclear-armed Iran would be folly, war with a nuclear-armed Pakistan would be a disaster. It would open a Pandora's box of instability, crises, and conflicts that could engulf neighboring states. It would undermine U.S. strategic interests abroad and further erode American liberties at home. Yet the Bush administration has been laying the foundation for such a war for months, and Barack Obama has raised eyebrows with his tough talk about invading Pakistan in hopes of killing Osama bin Laden.

On January 25 of last year, the *Washington Post* reported that the Bush administration was building eight bases along the Afghan-Pakistan border from which to attack Islamic militants in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province. Defense Secretary Robert Gates stated that "The Pentagon is 'ready, willing and able' to send U.S. troops to conduct joint combat operations with Pakistan's military against al-Qaeda sanctuaries in Pakistan's tribal areas."

Secretary Gates' announcement was disingenuous, coming as it did after Pakistan had publicly rejected the idea of U.S. troops operating inside her borders. This suggests that the Bush administration was considering unilateral military intervention despite warnings from the Pakistani government that "any unilateral action by the United States would be regarded as an invasion."

Where would the money come from for a war with Pakistan? The proposed military budget of the Department of Defense grew from $396 billion in 2003 to $440 billion in 2007; an additional 40 percent is now off the books, and this figure does not include the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation estimates at $700 billion. Meanwhile, the U.S. economy has been battered by rising oil prices, a falling dollar, the subprime mortgage crisis, a credit crunch, a deteriorating housing market, layoffs, a volatile stock market, a mounting national debt and deficit, and a meltdown in its financial sector.

Where would the U.S. government get the necessary troops for such a war? The U.S. military is already stretched to the breaking point in Iraq and Afghanistan. Enlistments are down, and reinstating the draft would be politically unpopular and socially divisive. In Iraq, approximately 156,000 troops still have not been able to defeat the insurgents, and plans to reduce troop levels have been suspended. Washington is attempting to lower the level of violence against U.S. troops by bribing Sunni tribes to attack foreign jihadists. While these Sunnis oppose the American occupation of their country, they eagerly accept U.S. money and weapons so they can defeat their political rivals and prepare for a future showdown with their benefactors. In Afghanistan, the base for the proposed intervention in Pakistan, the United States lacks sufficient troops to roll back a resurgent Taliban that effectively controls the southern half of the country, the homeland of the Pushtuns. Washington has been forced to call on NATO members for several thousand additional troops—a request not likely to be met.

Both sides of the Afghan-Pakistan border are inhabited by Pushtuns whose combined population of over 38 million is larger than that of Iraq. In contrast, the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan is estimated at only 25,500. Pushtuns in Afghanistan form the backbone of the Taliban and are bound to their brethren in Pakistan by ties of blood, 60 major tribes and over 400 clans, custom and law, the Pushtunwali, and now an Islamic and nationalistic anti-Americanism. Will the eight U.S. military bases along the Afghan-Pakistan border become eight Dien Bien Phus?

U.S. diplomatic policy toward Pakistan has been self-defeating. Washington persuaded the Musharraf government to attack alleged Al Qaeda and Taliban militants hiding in the Northwest Frontier Province. That destabilized the region, radicalized the tribal population, and resulted in the establishment of an Islamic Emirate of Waziristan, which Islamabad was forced to recognize to end the disastrous war.

The February 18, 2008, election resulted in a victory for the secular anti-Musharraf opposition, comprising the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Pakistan Muslim League. However, hostili-

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ty to U.S. military intervention is found across Pakistan's political spectrum, government and opposition, Islamists and secularists, pro- and anti-American politicians. Under these circumstances, how could Washington intervene without causing further damage to the international reputation and strategic interests of the United States?

Although Washington insists it wants a stable Pakistan free from Islamic radicalism, the policy it is pursuing in neighboring Iran is ensuring the opposite. Endeavoring to promote "regime change" in Tehran, Washington is supporting ethnic secessionist groups in Iran. Among them are the Baluch, who inhabit adjoining territory called Baluchistan, the largest province in Pakistan, accounting for 44 percent of the country's area. The Bush administration has enlisted, funded, and armed the Baluch in a Sunni fundamentalist army called Jundullah (Army of God). From bases in Pakistan, Jundullah is waging a guerrilla war attacking installations and personnel inside Iran.

The Baluch of Pakistan have been fighting for decades for their independence from Islamabad. By arming them to fight Iran, Washington is giving them the means to resume fighting Pakistan. Such a policy is undermining Pakistani authority and political stability in Baluchistan. It is making it more likely that the Baluch of Pakistan, not Iran, will be the ones to achieve their independence. If Baluchistan breaks away, Sind and the Northwest Frontier Province will eventually secede as well. The impact of any balkanization of Pakistan on India, Islamic radicalism, and nuclear proliferation would adversely affect U.S. strategic interests in South Asia.

U.S. diplomatic policy toward Pakistan is schizophrenic. The Bush administration has demanded that Pakistan suppress Islamic fundamentalists among the Pushtuns in the north, but support Islamic fundamentalists among the Baluch in the south. By sponsoring Jundullah, Washington is, in many ways, recreating the Mujahideen of the 1980's from which Al Qaeda and the Taliban sprang. This is potentially a greater threat to U.S. national security than the disintegration of Pakistan (though the two may go hand in hand).

The United Nations estimates Iraq's population at 29 million and Afghanistan's at 27 million. Pakistan's population is more than five-and-a-half times larger. Washington may wish to fight only Islamic militants in the Northwest Frontier Province, but for all practical purposes it would be at war with 162 million people. U.S. military operations would also be severely hampered by rugged terrain; limited air, road, and rail transportation; and financial constraints.

An attack on Iran has been prevented, to date, by Defense Secretary Gates and Commander of CENTCOM Admiral Fallon. The United States has neither the manpower nor the resources for the job, and any attack would endanger U.S. troops in Iraq. But in September, Secretary Gates said that the United States could have 10,000 more troops in place to intervene in Pakistan "in the spring and summer of 2009." Admiral Fallon has taken early retirement and has been replaced by David Petraeus, who had been commanding general of the Multi-National Force—Iraq. Iran has a population of 71 million. Pakistan's population is more than twice as large. Iran has one of the world's largest paramilitaries, numbering over 11 million, but its active service strength is 420,000, with a reserve of 350,000. Pakistan's active service strength is 619,000, with a reserve of 528,000.

The U.S. military would quickly defeat the Pakistanis in a conventional war, but there would be American casualties, and the victory would be hollow, since those Pakistani soldiers who were not killed or captured would likely join the guerrillas in attacking U.S. troops, supplies, and installations.

Then there is Pakistan's atomic bomb. Would an intervention to eliminate Islamic militants in the Northwest Frontier Province require the U.S. military to seize Pakistan's nuclear warheads to prevent them from falling into the hands of Islamic militants or disaffected Pakistani military officers? If the U.S. military did not seize those warheads, would the government of India exploit a U.S. intervention to launch a surgical strike to seize or destroy the nuclear weapons of its political rival?

In February 2003, the U.S. Navy Center for Contemporary Conflict estimated Pakistan already had between 35 and 95 nuclear bombs. These warheads have not been placed on missiles but are kept separate in a secure facility. Pakistan has modified F-16 fighter jets to carry warheads. Unless all warheads and modified F-16s are secured, the threat of a suicide pilot dropping the bomb on U.S. forces would be very real. And, should India join in the intervention, New Delhi could also be targeted.

Even if the Indian government takes no action, it will still be perceived by many Muslims in India as an accomplice in Washington's efforts to weaken and humiliate Pakistan. India still has not recovered from the Muslim-Hindu bloodletting that occurred in Gujarat, an Indian state bordering Pakistan, in 2002. A U.S. military intervention in Pakistan would mean an upsurge in radicalism among Muslims in India that would increase political volatility, outbreaks of communal violence, and economic difficulties for the country as a whole.

The U.S. military might be able to secure Pakistan's nuclear weapons, but even if Washington could redeploy all U.S. forces to Pakistan, it would still be unable to occupy a country of 162 million hostile people. Yet it would have to occupy the country in order to have a realistic chance of extricating Islamic militants. Thus, any intervention would result in American casualties but would not achieve any desirable political ends. It would only win converts for the cause of radical Islam; destabilize the subcontinent and much of the Middle East; ensure that anti-Americanism dominates popular passions in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan for the foreseeable future; cripple the U.S. military; weaken an already feeble U.S. economy; and play havoc with international markets.

Joseph E. Fallon writes from Rye, New York.

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Frummie's Song

by John Willson

Frummie and his friends were beside themselves a few months ago over the nerve of *Vanity Fair*. It *quoted* them! And they were surprised that *Vanity Fair* was . . . unfair. "Out of context! Out of context!" Context, I think someone said, is the last refuge of the scoundrel. Some of the neo-neos felt betrayed—this stuff wasn't supposed to come out until after the election, or after the New Year, or after the Fall of the Empire. But there it was, and everybody got confused again. Did the Frummies want a bigger war, or a better war, or a sort of war?

National Review was quick to respond. "*Vanity* Unfair: An NRO Symposium" solemnly appeared. It isn't seemly to rehearse the boring responses of the serious neos. But Frummie's song, which I here offer as a poem, is noteworthy. Never mind that it has no structure or rhyme; progressive poetry never does.

I always believed as a speech-
writer that
If you could persuade the pres-
ident
To commit himself to certain
words,
He would feel himself commit-
ted to
The ideas that underlay those
words.
And the big shock to me has
been that
Although the president said the
words, he
Just did not absorb the ideas.
And that is the
Root of, maybe, everything.

"Listen to the words, mr president-vice president-secretary of defense," the neos slyly say. Frummies have words, and if they can just get them in the right mouths and the right journals, the ideas they stand for will make the world safe for them. All in all, Frummies prefer presidents like JFK, who was charming as well as educable. He got committed to the words. He absorbed them. Maybe Democrats absorb better than Republicans.

But then, why wouldn't Frummie stand up and cheer about how much Bush II has absorbed? Preventive war is a very big item. W, however, isn't charming; maybe the Obamanation will absorb even better. The appointment of Mr. Emanuel is a good start. He volunteered for the Israeli army, but not ours. At least he volunteered. Neocons, as Taki has said, are different from women only in that women are sometimes found in combat. (I apologize to all women for that last crack, especially to my granddaughter, who is an 82nd Airborne combat medic.) The Democratic leaders, at least since John Kerry, haven't volunteered for anything more dangerous than "community organizing."

"I know what you're thinking about," said Tweedledum, "but it isn't so, nohow." "Contrariwise," continued Tweedledee, "if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't it ain't. That's logic." Frummie foreign policy is logic: ideo-logic. When we were small-town kids we decided to have a war. All of us knew about guns and how dangerous they were, but the logical ones among us figured out that we could fight with homemade guns: less lethal but capable of escalation to the point of imperial stand-off. We made what were essentially shotguns out of pipes and cherry bombs and BBs. I started a fire in my dad's garage with a misfired cannon. We and our enemies (I think they were enemies; it seemed so at the time) didn't kill each other because one of them escalated to the point that he blew their entire fort down demonstrating the ultimate weapon, and we all decided that "but as it isn't it ain't," whether it ever might have been or not.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Agreed to have a battle;
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee
Had spoiled his nice new rattle.

Just then flew down a monstrous crow,
As black as a tar-barrel;
Which frightened both the heroes so,
They quite forgot their quarrel.

It's best to be a little forgetful, at times.

The "root, maybe, of everything" is that Frummie's Song has no tune. It's "through the looking glass" with no rhymes. A Frummie-symp wailed on a blog response to "*Vanity* Unfair": "WHY would any republican or conservative consent to be interviewed by any of these lying sacks of s***?" Well, aside from the fact that no conservative was interviewed, another responder gets closer to a real insight when he says that "Joshua Muravchik suggested recently that the Neocons should admit their errors on the Iraq War and then move on expeditiously to bomb Iran and run Joe Lieberman for president in 2008." McCain was a stand-in, but he couldn't make us do bombs because Lehman Brothers was on our minds. But the monstrous black crow in the Frum-con closet may get out at any time and frighten them all back to their original ideo-logic, which isn't, by anybody's definition who is outside the looking glass, conservative. And one can absorb ideas only if there are ideas to absorb.

Frummies should be locked in a soundproof well-lighted room for a year with *The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll*. They would not learn to laugh, of course—senses of humor are reserved for those who understand that "terrorism" cannot be gone to war against and "democracy" cannot be exported—but they might sooner or later recognize themselves in the Walrus and the Carpenter, who made all the oysters their lunch. Bigger Carpenters always come along.

John Willson is professor emeritus of history at Hillsdale College.

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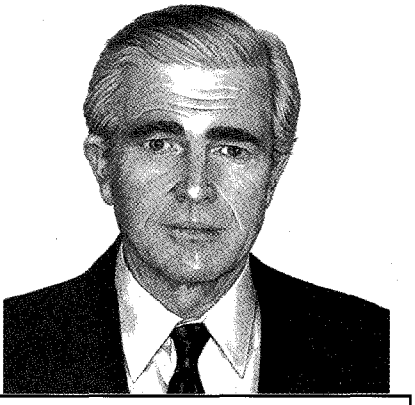
by George McCartney

Wantum and Quantum



W.
Produced by Emperor Motion Pictures
Directed by Oliver Stone
Screenplay by Stanley Weiser
Distributed by Lionsgate

Quantum of Solace
Produced and distributed by Columbia Pictures
Directed by Marc Forster
Screenplay by Paul Haggis and Neal Purvis

It's too bad *W.*, Oliver Stone's satiric biopic of his Yale classmate and our 43rd President, didn't come out four years ago. We might have been spared George W. Bush's second term and enjoyed a comic dividend. One can only imagine the fun of watching John F. Kerry impersonating John F. Kennedy by way of Ichabod Crane these last four years, his performance wittily enhanced by Ms. 57 Varieties at his side.

But Stone waited until after the damage had been fully done to tell us W.'s been a bad president. His thesis is elegantly simple. Bush suffers Oedipally, wanting alternately to please and to outshine his distant father. Like most elegant explanations, this one beclouds as much as it illumines. Human behavior, being ineluctably social, has too many permutations to be explained so cleanly. Still, Stone does a fair job with the *how* of Bush's performance, if not the *why*.

Stone makes the case that, over the past eight years, the father-lorn Mr. Bush has proved himself an utter incompetent, a judgment most embarrassingly apparent whenever he steps up to a podium. Recreating Bush's April 14, 2004, press conference, the one in which he was asked what mistakes he had made during his first term in office, actor Josh Brolin, playing Bush, grips his podium, thrusts his right shoulder forward, and hunkers down with a show of dogged determination. You half expect him to growl. Instead, he *umms* and *ahs*, shakes his head, and finally comes up with what he evidently thinks is a clever quip. "I wish you woulda given me this written question ahead of time so I could plan for it," he says with that muted snicker that has so endeared him to the American public. This moment perfectly captures the W. we've come to love. He's a man so out of his depth that he cannot connect with the softest of softball queries. The self-designated Decider doesn't even swing at this one. A 12-year-old would have turned it into a base hit, at the very least. Mr. Bush only had to say something like this: "Mistakes? Sure. For instance, not explaining as fully as I might have just how successful we've been in Iraq to date. True, not everything has gone as well as we'd hoped, but today I'd like you to know we've already achieved three of our most important goals. First, . . . " Whatever came next would have been baloney, but at least it might have given us reason to believe that our Commander in Chief could think on his feet, and that maybe he'd yet adjust his course before he ran the country disastrously aground. But no: Bush couldn't think of anything at all. "I'm sure something will pop into my head here in the midst of this press conference," he lamely went on, pleading jocularly that "with all the pressure of trying to come up with an answer . . . it hadn't yet." Note the folksy "hadn't," a touching good-ol'-boyism! Did we deserve such a ridiculous president? Don't answer.

With unwonted fairness, Stone gives equal time to another podium moment in which Mr. Bush seems to get things right. Asked by a reporter how he thinks history will judge him, he responds unhesitatingly. "History? In history we'll all be dead." Then he flashes his patented frat-boy smirk, clearly pleased with himself. Such existential wit could only be founded upon a fabulous indifference to history. In an invented scene before his election, Governor Bush whines to his long-suffering wife that there's never been a president's son who has made it to the White House himself. Laura gently alludes to the Adams family. Exasperated by her useless marshaling of mere fact, W. responds, "Yeah, that's about 300 years ago!"

It's not that W.'s evil; he's just a bit vacant in the top story, and his, shall we say, moral fiber has been left unstrung by unearned privilege throughout his life. More than these deficits, he lacks curiosity about the world, in general, and about himself, in particular. During the run-up to his invasion of Iraq, he's shown in a Cabinet meeting, walking around the board table, huffing and puffing about how he's going to kick Saddam Hussein's ass and make peace "break out all over the Middle East." He's determined to give democracy a chance to take hold in the region. It's clear, however, that he hasn't the slightest interest in finding out who Saddam is or why he runs Iraq as he does. He never wonders for a moment why democracy has never flourished before in the 5,000-year history of the cradle of civilization. Nor does it ever occur to him that knowing something about the region's various cultures—Persian, Arab, Kurd, and Israeli—might help him make better policy decisions. Why would he need to know all that? He's armed with the ability to tell right from wrong, and he's unswervingly confident that this moral birthright makes him the best leader for our perilous times. Even

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more, he confides to his evangelical minister, God has chosen him to be president. History, politics, culture—all are weightless when placed in the balance with his exalted calling.

Stone portrays W. as a feckless Candide surrounded by clueless sycophants and cynical Panglosses. Playing sycophant-in-chief Condoleeza Rice, Thandi Newton has somehow transformed her beautiful face to look like a female version of Mortimer Snerd, buck of tooth and dim of eye. Constantly grinning, she bobbles her head in agreement with whatever her boss says, no matter how preposterous. As Dick Cheney, the head Pangloss, Richard Dreyfuss conveys the Vice President's well-honed Machiavellian touch. When W. takes him aside to tell him that he must refrain from taking over the Cabinet meetings, Cheney nods deferentially, but as he walks from the room, we see in his ever-so-slightly curled lower lip his contempt for his commander. Only Colin Powell (Jeffrey Wright) ever questions W.'s decisions. Once Bush makes it plain he wants to invade Iraq because of Saddam's alliance with Al Qaeda, Powell respectfully observes that there's no evidence of such collusion. He then pointedly argues that if our troops depose Saddam, they'll be required to check the civil war that will almost certainly break out between the Shia and Sunni. W., of course, doesn't know what the hell Powell is talking about. Taking note of Mr. Bush's confusion, Cheney lightly chides Powell for being so cautious. Powell bridles: "Don't patronize me, Mr. Five Deferments," he says, referring to Cheney's youthful reluctance to join the fray in Vietnam. (As Cheney once explained, he had other priorities at the time.) No matter. W. has already made up his mind. Here's his chance to finish what his father had left undone in the Gulf War. At last he'll prove himself to the old man.

So W. allowed his troubled relationship with his father to dictate his decisions. Plausible. But unresolved Oedipal dynamics don't necessarily lead to disastrous careers. There's something more here, and that's the force of others in the Bush Jr. administration. Although this is crucial to understanding why W. failed so miserably, Stone only vaguely gestures at it. All presidents have had to deal with the ambitions of the others in their administrations. It takes a man of character, confidence, and insight to stand his ground against counselors whose seeming concern for the nation may mask a private agenda. W. is demonstrably wanting on all three counts. He's a nice guy who once made a reasonably shrewd owner of a baseball team. But up against Dick Cheney and his neoconservative pals, Bush didn't stand much of a chance. Under cover of addressing the attacks of September 11, Cheney & Co. were able to use W. to initiate their preexisting plan to transform the Middle East. They were determined to render the OPEC nations compliant with American oil interests and to protect Israel from any further attacks by her hostile neighbors. And now we've turned the entire Muslim world implacably against us, put Israel in more peril than ever before, and tossed our economy into free fall. Stone's film has its merits as dramatization, but as analysis it does little more than rehash what the public at large already knows. Stone missed his chance to make of Bush 43 a revelation of the much deeper currents in our present reckless course.

* * *

The title of the new James Bond film, *Quantum of Solace*, comes from an Ian Fleming short story, but it reminded me of Samuel Beckett's 1938 novel *Murphy*, which argues that the amount of desire in the world is, at all times and in all places, an unvarying *quantum of wantum*. However infelicitous, this phrase certainly sums up James Bond, who has always striven to fulfill his and our wantum.

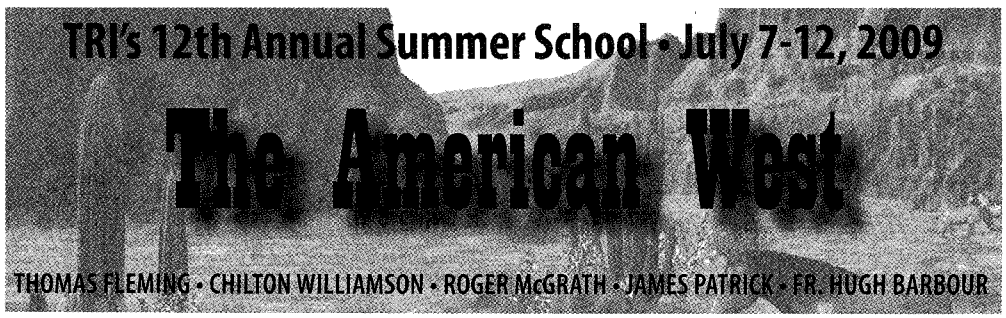
Bond is at once the pure consumer and the perfect commodity, a condition recognized by the Omega watch company, which has wrapped its Seamaster Planet Ocean timepiece around the manly wrist of Bond's latest avatar, Daniel Craig, to hawk these luxe chronometers at $4,900 a tick.

Bond's the man who possesses so extravagantly that, in turn, we're supposed to want to possess *him* as a sort of talisman capable of fulfilling our desires for food, drink, technology, and, of course, women. Identify with Bond, and you, too, can become an accomplished consumer of the world's endless delights.

So even though Mr. Bond is still despondent over the death of his lady love in *Casino Royale*, his wantum remains undiminished. When he meets Strawberry Fields, MI6's lovely agent in La Paz, Bolivia, she takes him to a hotel chosen, she explains, in keeping with their cover as teachers on sabbatical. Balking at its Third World shabbiness, Bond whisks her to the upscale Hotel Andean, complete with pool and four-star restaurant. At the reservations desk, he maintains cover professionally enough, telling the clerk that they're boondoggling pedagogues who have just won the lottery.

Soon he and Miss Fields are ensconced in a sumptuously appointed bedroom, naked but for the sheets they have discreetly wrapped around themselves as he skillfully applies his internationally acclaimed massage to her demurely appreciative back. Now that's wantum victorious.

And the plot? Oh, it's the same as the Bond films before *Casino*'s risky departure from form. The franchise, after all, has its own wantum to quantum. ©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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Curandera

Because Héctor had experience as an historical researcher looking up books on the subject of Pancho Villa at the public library, it was agreed that he should be the one responsible for ascertaining the location of the treasure, and that the job of Jesús "Eddie" would be to outfit the expedition to Ladron Peak when the time arrived to set forth upon their quest.

To his chagrin, Héctor discovered that historical detective work required a good deal more knowledge and expertise than checking out books from the library did. At a loss as to where to begin, he settled finally on the *Valencia County News-Bulletin*. Having printed the story, Héctor reasoned, the paper's editor must be well versed in the events it described. In fact the editor was too busy to see him, and the receptionist referred Héctor to an editorial assistant who said she worked part-time for the newspaper while taking classes at the University of New Mexico Valencia Campus. The treasure story, she explained, had appeared in what was known to the trade as a "canned" article, meaning that no one at the *News-Bulletin* knew anything whatsoever about the subject matter. If Héctor needed further information, she suggested he visit the Harvey House Museum at 712 Dalies Street and ask to speak with the column's author.

Héctor had heard of the museum, but only as the custodian of a miniature-train collection. He drove there at once and was told by a docent that the address of the Historical Society was 104 North First. Irked, he got back in the van and drove on to First Street. Historical research, Héctor decided, was a lot more tedious than he'd realized. Perhaps, after all, he should have started with the internet, which meant a saving in physical effort at least, as well as in gas. When he found the Society closed and no one about to answer the bell, he decided it was the last straw and went straight home. Computers were his business, and if he couldn't find what he was looking for on the web, chances were the thing didn't exist, or never had in the first place. In the easeful privacy of his office, Héctor seated himself before the glowing screen and typed CAMINO REAL APACHE RAID STOLEN TREASURE LADRON PEAK into the search engine and hit RETURN. He was still at it three hours later when AveMaría got home from the supermarket after picking up Contracepción at Darfur Relief. Nothing. Zilch. Nada.

That evening at the Taberna Aztlán, Héctor recounted the events—or nonevents—of his discouraging day to Jesús "Eddie." His friend was sympathetic, but not particularly helpful otherwise. History was bullsh-t, he asserted. His Grandfather Luis would have been able to tell Héctor everything he needed to know about the Camino Real legend. Unfortunately, Grandfather Luis was dead. Hence there was nothing Héctor could do but consult a *curandera* if they were to lay hands on the Spanish treasure.

"I thought *curanderas* healed people," Héctor told him, doubtfully.

"Hombre, they do. But they are also a kind of *bruja*. The best ones can see everything, they can foretell the future—and the past! There are not many left anymore—most are in Mexico. But Beatriz knows one, right here in town. She is very old, compadre—maybe a hundred years or more! Also she is a *padrone* at Our Lady of Belen. Only, the priest does not know this. He would excommunicate her if he found out about it, Beatriz says. She's got mad and threatened to tell him—many times—but in the end she has always chickened out."

The thought of consulting such a woman, or even being in the same room with her, gave Héctor the creeps. His own mother had visited *curanderas* regularly in Namiquipa and the surrounding villages, and no good had ever come of it—rather the opposite. Also he did not believe such dire measures to be necessary, at least not yet.

"I am an experienced historian," he reminded Jesús "Eddie." "If I can discover new things about Pancho Villa, things that have never been known to anyone before, maybe I can learn where it is we should dig for the treasure. I will give myself a month to do this in. If I fail, then I will consult with Beatriz's *curandera*."

"In order to concentrate properly you will need to drink a lot of beer, amigo," Jesús "Eddie" assured him. "We must meet here every night, and talk over everything you have found out that day."

Héctor compressed his lips to a thin line. He could not help feeling somewhat annoyed. Jesús "Eddie" was effectively unemployed, and living off his wife.

"Don't forget, I have a business to run, as well as search for treasure," he reminded his friend, tartly.

"Buried treasure" was inseparable in his mind from "map," and so it occurred to Héctor to resume his search by scrutinizing every map of the area he could lay hands on. A shop in Los Lunas had for a year or more kept in its display window a hand-drawn map of territorial New Mexico—perhaps two-and-a-half by three feet—which he had admired for nearly as long. In addition to cities, towns, wagon roads, railroads, and trails, the map had marked upon it historical incidents summarized in a crabbed hand at the sites where they had occurred. Recognizing that this map might well

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be useful to his enterprise, as well as valuable in itself, Héctor resolved to purchase it, if the price were small enough to escape notice by AveMaría. As yet, he'd said nothing to his wife regarding the treasure quest, for fear she'd tell him to stop wasting his time and devote his energy to drumming up new service contracts instead of pursuing wild-goose chases in the desert.

Héctor, who'd half expected to learn the map had been sold already, was greatly relieved to find it still on display in the window. He parked out front and entered the store. It turned out to be a frame and print shop, rather more elegant than anything he was accustomed to patronize. Though somewhat intimidated, Héctor walked boldly enough to the rear of the place, where an Anglo who appeared to be in his early thirties was seated on a stool behind a tall desk, at work with a straight rule, an elbow rule, and a pencil. At Héctor's approach, he looked up from the desk and smiled with polite reserve. The young man had on chinos and a blue golf shirt with a golden sheep stitched over the right breast. His owlish glasses were horn-rimmed, and a wing of smooth flaxen hair fell almost over one lens. Héctor wasn't certain he cared for the type.

"May I help you?" the young man asked.

Héctor turned round halfway and gestured toward the front of the store with his thumb. "That map of New Mexico in the window," he said. "I'd like to have a look at it, please."

"Of course."

The shop owner slipped from his stool, crossed to a wide desk, pulled out a drawer, and drew a large sheet of paper from it. He placed the sheet on his desk over the one on which he had been working and smoothed it with his hand.

"There you are," he said. "Hand-drawn territorial map of New Mexico, from the late 19th century."

"I want the one in the window," Héctor told him.

"Why, they're all the same—facsimiles, you know. I believe the original is in the State House in Santa Fe."

"You mean, it's a copy—there's a lot of them out there?" Héctor didn't trouble to hide his crushing disappointment.

"Sure. They're run off all the time—very popular with newcomers to the state. Only twenty-five dollars apiece, by the way."

So much for secrecy, Héctor thought. On the map, he located the boundary notch just west of El Paso and traced with his finger the northwesterly course of the Rio Grande. The drawings and lettering were crowded, dense, and scratchy, very hard to read. "Does it show an Apache raid on a Spanish caravan on the Camino Real in the middle 1600's?" he asked, after searching in vain for almost a minute.

"I don't know, let's see." The young man turned the map to face him and bent close above it. "Rather difficult to read, but no, I don't think so," he concluded, lifting his head. "Of course, such attacks were frequent. Nearly regular occurrences, for decades."

"Then who would know?" Héctor asked in dismay.

The shop owner, noting his desperation, looked surprised. Then he smiled. "Someone at the university, perhaps? You might look there."

Héctor felt certain that, his type or not, this was a good young man. "Can you recommend anyone in particular?" he asked gratefully.

"Well . . . You could try Dr. Salbador—Salazar Salbador—on the Valencia campus. Comes in here all the time, looking for stuff to do with the Southwest border area and so forth. They say he's an expert on the subject."

Chiefly from gratitude, Héctor went ahead with the purchase, counting out $25 from his wallet while the young man rolled the map tightly and inserted it into a cardboard tube. The sum was small enough to escape AveMaría's notice, and besides, he was paying in cash.

It took him three days to run Dr. Salbador to earth in his faculty office between classes. The Professor was a small, thin, weak-chested man in his thirties, with a sallow complexion and

wild hair shot prematurely with gray, dressed in work boots and jeans and wearing rimless glasses jammed back into his eye sockets. Héctor disliked him on sight. University hippies and radical types had never been his favorite sort of people, ever since his own days at school.

"I'm sorry to be a nuisance," he began, "but the man from the print shop suggested I talk with you."

Dr. Salbador heard him condescendingly. The walls of the cramped, disorderly office were covered with Nation of Aztlán and faded César Chávez posters and a number of framed historical prints.

"Jeremy Spode," he agreed. "He is an OK person, for an Anglo."

"He said you're an expert on border stuff."

The Professor smiled humorlessly. "I am an *activist* on the border, not an expert," he corrected.

"Anyway, you know a lot about it—right?"

Dr. Salbador looked smug and ran his fingers through his hair.

"I'm looking for information about an Apache raid on a Spanish caravan on the Camino Real in the mid-

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1600's, I think it was. The Indians are supposed to have stolen a lot of treasure from it and buried it in the mountains somewhere around here." Since the Professor did not at all look like a treasure hunter himself, Héctor considered it safe to mention the hidden plunder.

Dr. Salbador stared at him as if he were a bug. "First, I should not have to tell you, a Chicano, that it is incorrect to speak of 'Indians'; they are 'indigenous peoples.' Second, the indigenous people you speak of did not 'steal' anything. They simply took what was rightfully theirs. Third, I do not acknowledge the Spanish criminals and their genocidal empire. They do not exist for me. I would never teach my students about the history of those people. I would not teach them about the history of El Norte either, except they need to know about it if they are to destroy it, and recover their land and their heritage—to recreate the historical Nation of Aztlán!"

Héctor perceived that his first impression of this man had been an accurate one. "How can you wish to destroy America?" he demanded in an unsteady voice. "America has given you everything you have—freedom, equality, human rights, equal opportunity, a good job. If you hate it so much, why don't you go back to Mexico and leave us Americans in peace?"

Dr. Salbador's stare of murderous hatred would have done credit to Rudolfo Fierro. "You are a Twinkie," he hissed; "—brownish on the outside, white on the inside. Get out of my office! I have students waiting outside to see me."

So Héctor got. He could not help noticing that the students lining up outside the door looked exactly like Dr. Salazar Salbador, only younger.

It was apparent to him now that he must consult with the *curandera*—the *bruja*—despite his misgivings, indeed his fear. (If even a Catholic priest disapproved of such a person, what would Bro. Billy Joe have to say?) Héctor dreaded the prospect of confronting her amidst an array of vials, potions, and witch's brews; he felt like a character out of *The Exorcist*. But there was no other way he could see to locate the treasure. So that evening at the Taberna Aztlán (who, Héctor thought indignantly, had ever thought to give it that name?), he reluctantly informed Jesús "Eddie" of his decision.

Beatriz Juárez arranged for the consultation. The *curandera's* real name was Alicia Montano, but she was known professionally as Carmen Cortez. Though she and her husband lived in a handsome house in a new subdivision north of town, her office or studio or whatever you called it was in a crumbling, small adobe house a block from the railroad tracks downtown, where the better sort of Catholic was unlikely to observe her coming or going from work. As she insisted on meeting her clients at night, Héctor had to face his ordeal nearly cold sober, after no more than a double shot of whiskey at the Taberna Aztlán. He considered packing a gun under his coat when he met his appointment, but decided in the end against doing so. ◁

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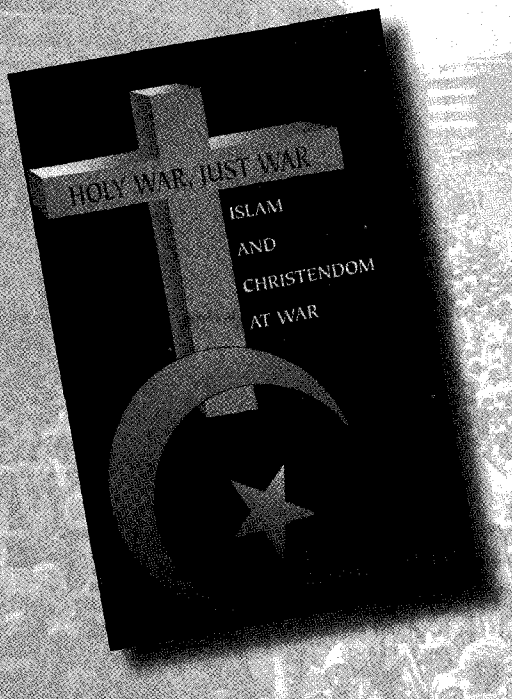

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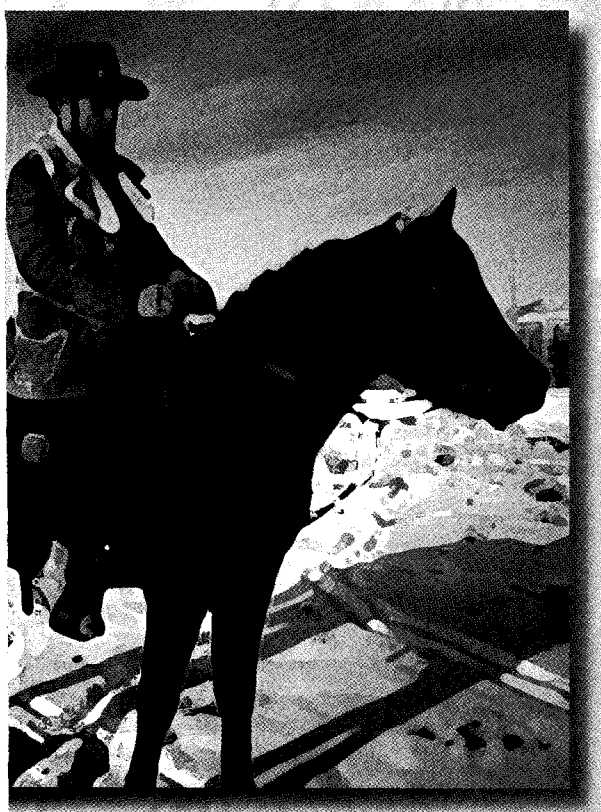

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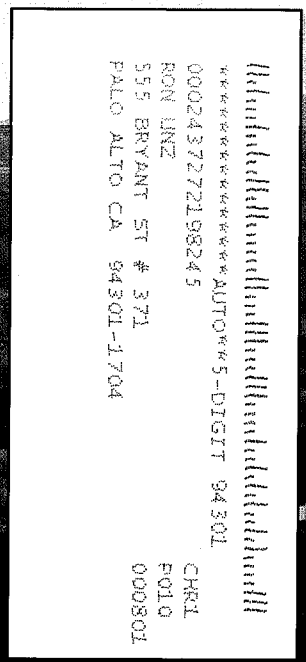

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